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AN  
**INQUIRY**  
INTO THE MERITS  
OF THE  
**PRINCIPAL NAVAL ACTIONS,**  
BETWEEN  
**GREAT-BRITAIN**  
AND THE  
**UNITED STATES ;**  
COMPRISING  
AN ACCOUNT OF  
ALL BRITISH AND AMERICAN SHIPS OF WAR,  
RECIPROCALLY CAPTURED AND DESTROYED.  
SINCE THE 18<sup>th</sup> OF JUNE 1812.

BY  
✓  
**WILLIAM JAMES.**



" TRUTH came from above, FALSEHOOD from below."

JOHNSON.



**HALIFAX, N. S.**

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,  
BY ANTHONY H. HOLLAND,  
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.1816.





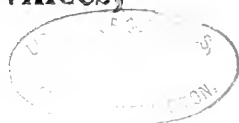
TO THE  
**LOYAL INHABITANTS**

OF

HIS MAJESTY'S

**North-American Provinces,**

THIS



**HUMBLE APPEAL TO THEIR UNDERSTANDINGS,**

IS

**MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,**

BY

*THE AUTHOR.*

HALIFAX, 9TH MARCH, 1816.

## ERRATA.

Page.	Note.
6	32 <i>after</i> victories <i>add</i> often
—	42 <i>after</i> ( <i>add</i> now
—	43 <i>for</i> opiniated <i>r.</i> opiniative
7	41 <i>for</i> imminently <i>r.</i> eminently
21	21 <i>for</i> one <i>r.</i> two
—	29 <i>for</i> slightly <i>r.</i> severely
29	<i>omit</i> note.
39	33 <i>for</i> engraved <i>r.</i> engraven
61	8 <i>for</i> sixth <i>r.</i> first
—	34 <i>for</i> the next <i>r.</i> on monday
65	16 <i>for</i> note (Z) <i>r.</i> this note
The last	15 <i>for</i> ships <i>r.</i> sloops

## ADVERTISEMENT.

The author regrets that Table 7, in consequence of his inability to make it so copious as he intended, does not accord exactly with the references made to it in the notes. For vessels which nearly agree in tonnage, however, the same dimensions may answer ; and the last column in the table, refers to pages of the work, where the names of such vessels appear.

## PREFACE.

Our late war with the United States has given birth to an opinion, (corrected, as we would hope, to superficial thinkers and interested foreigners,) that the British, so long without equals upon the ocean, have at length found their superiors.

A reflecting Englishman does not pretend to claim for his country; an absolutely indefeasible title to maritime superiority; or to limit to his own shores, the means by which it is to be acquired and sustained. Long viewed and cherished, as a chief among the securities of his national blessings, he may consider its foundations as deep and strong, without supposing them immutable.

He does not deny, that the descendants from Britons, may possess a portion of that adaptation to nautical pursuits, which has so remarkably characterized their ancestors: or that they may inherit from them, a spirit of adventure, a manly love for professional excellence, and enduring courage in danger. If tropical and local, as well as other circumstances of country, are equally favourable, no reason can be assigned, why qualities which have already led to such super-eminent influence on the globe, should not again, if ably directed, raise their possessors to a corresponding distinction in the scale of nations.

What candour must admit as possible, the Americans (surely the best judges in this case) have determined as actually certain, both as to the supposititious facts in their most comprehensive meaning, and the structure reared upon them. So that it is only left to us to hope, that, while their high destinies open, and we recede to that secondary station assigned us, they may adopt the moderation of their prototype in greatness: and make the same sober consecration of power to the purposes of self-preservation, and universal utility.

However, as our sagacity does not reach to the political calculation so modestly proposed by the American visionary in his collection of libels, called a "History of the War;"\* and as we think it may also exceed the power of his arithmetic, to fix the dates of those events, we shall, for the present, take the liberty, in conformity with our old prejudices, to consider our naval reputation as but little affected by the war, in the eyes of dispassionate men. And we do not hesitate to aver, that it will be extremely difficult for any combination of force, hereafter to oppose, successfully, a power of such unexampled weight; acquired too, and established, under God, not fortuitously, but by the happy and steady application of principles, and by the assiduous cultivation of very singular, if not peculiar, moral and physical advantages.

It is true, that the frequent recurrence of an event, become so unlikely, as

\*"It would be a curious question in political arithmetic, to determine, what number of American ships, and their rates, would be sufficient to destroy the British navy, taking the naval events of the late war as a scale by which to calculate; and how long it would take to provide the necessary number of vessels, taking the increase of the navy, during the war, as a ratio." *Low's Hist. of the War*, p. 366.

a disastrous issue to us, in contests upon the ocean, even upon unequal terms, might seem to indicate a cause of more than a temporary or accidental nature; still it is capable of a much more natural and satisfactory solution, than upon the supposition of any weakness or decay in this branch of our national polity, or any fatal change of spirit in our seamen. It is presumed that solution will be found in the subsequent pages.

That an opinion of this kind should be prevalent in the United States, is not surprising. Much less than what has occurred, would have been sufficient to establish its credit with the bulk of the American people; and if the liberal and ingenuous among them, be supposed free from their violent and unreasonable antipathies, they are not beyond the action of this principle:—A NATIONAL VANITY, WITHOUT PRECEDENT OR EQUAL.

As for ourselves, if there are any among us, who, without the same colourable pretences, draw similar inference, it may be confessed, that appearances were such as might mislead those who are neither weak, nor disloyal. Among many sources of error which will be noticed hereafter, I shall at present suggest this; that Americans alone, of all foreign powers, possess the means of addressing their statements directly to the understandings of Englishmen;—they speak the same language. Availing themselves of their talents for misrepresentation, columns are written on the merits of a naval action, often before the event has been received by the British public. Their false, but plausible statements, are readily given by our own prints, without note or comment; and thus impressions are made, which are not easily effaced.

In Great-Britain, if a ministerial editor chooses to gloss over a defeat, or enhance a victory, the opposition-papers soon set the matter in its true light; but in the United States, the government and opposition-parties, the democrats and federalists, however they may disagree on common questions, unite in puffing off the military spirit of their country. The first are engaged in bolstering the disgraces of the army; the latter, in amplifying and blazoning the exploits of the navy.

This is highly acceptable to the Government, which, if it does not direct, encourages these efforts, in order, by giving a war-character to the peaceable republicans, to forward its own particular views. All therefore that art can suggest, or credulity itself can bear, is set in motion; until the people are brought to the conviction that they *are*—“an intelligent, active and enlightened people, beyond all former example,—born to higher destinies than were ever yet opened to any nation,—the career of whose greatness is rapid, constant, and almost irresistible; whose annals, though recent, are already splendid and glorious.”\*

Whether or not the pages of the Sibylls have been opened to these favourites of the skies, it is not for me to determine; but how far their towering hopes can be supported by their late “naval exploits,” will appear presently. To exhibit those “exploits,” stripped of American tinsel; to rescue from aspersion, the character of Britons; and, in defeating the aims of an over-weening selfishness, to promote the cause of truth, is the object of the following sheets.

## INTRODUCTION.

The method of estimating a ship of war's force, as adopted in this work, may require some explanation.

In the first column of Table 1, and Table 3, is enumerated the guns mounted. To have stopped here, as the Americans generally do, would have been a tacit acknowledgment, that a two, and a forty-two-pounder gun, were equally destructive in action. The only reason to be assigned, why the Americans *publicly* support that inconsistent proposition, is, that their ships of war commonly carry heavier metal, than our ships, of the same, or even a greater, numerical force.

The broadside-weight of metal, as usually estimated, is not always fairly stated. For instance, if a ship mounts one or more shifting, or pivot-guns, that can be used on either side, to compute only half the round of shot thrown by all the guns, would give her an advantage equal to half the united calibres of the former. This most excellent plan of arming ships, prevails very much in the American service. Some of their smaller vessels, indeed, have all their guns so mounted.

Our method is, to include among the **BROADSIDE-GUNS**, all guns which traverse on pivots, either in the tops, or upon the deck; also shifting guns, pointed during action through broadside-ports, or so mounted, as to be fired without any. Upon this principle, the boat-sarronade, so frequent on board British ships, is brought into the broadside-force; but standing bow or stern chacers, being of no use upon the broadside, are merely enumerated among the guns-mounted.

The next column to that containing the broadside-weight of metal, enumerates the **MAN**; that is, every officer, man and boy in the ship, when the action commenced; except prisoners, or persons considered as such.

Then follows the **TONS-BURTHEN** or size of the ship. It is not customary, we know, to estimate this as part of a ship's force; but that a superiority in this respect, gives to a fighting ship considerable advantages, will, we trust, appear, when it is considered.

First, that the more large and roomy a ship is upon deck, the easier will she fight her guns;

Secondly, that the higher, to a certain extent, her battery is from the water, the greater will be its effect upon her adversary;

And thirdly, that the thicker the sides of the ship are, the less pervious they will be to shot; thereby, not only inspiring the men with increased confidence in the shelter they afford; but, by averting many of the casualties, to which thinner sides would have exposed both hull and crew, impairing the less, if not virtually augmenting, the power of a ship in action.

It is not asserted, however, that the tonnage, and the scantling or thickness of sides, bear to each other any regular proportion. But whatever difference exists in that respect between British and American ships, is *invariably* in favour of the latter; of which, as many instances will be found in the

subsequent pages of the work, we shall at present notice only one. The President, late American frigate, is nearly 150 tons less, but has top-sides one inch and a half thicker, than the Valiant, a British line-of-battle ship.\*

As a very material difference prevails between British and American tonnage, we shall endeavour to explain the manner by which each is cast ; as far, at least, as respects the public vessels of the two nations.

His majesty's ships are measured agreeably to an order of the Navy-Board; which directs "the length of the ship to be taken on a straight line on the lower side of the rabbet of the keel, from a perpendicular or square at the height of the upper† deck (and middle deck of three-decked ships) from the fore part of the stem ; then, from the length between those perpendiculars, subtract 3-5 of the extreme breadth, for the rake forward, and 2½ inches for every foot the wing-transom is high above the lower part of the rabbet of the keel, for the rake abaft :—the remainder is the length of the keel for tonnage." The main-breadth to be taken from the outside plank or thick-stuff, in the broadest part of the ship, either above, on, or below the wales, deducting from the said thick-stuff or plank, all that it exceeds the thickness of the plank at the bottom, which shall be accounted the main-breadth ; so that the moulding-breadth, or breadth of the frame, will then be less than the main-breadth, so found, the thickness of the plank of the bottom. Then multiply the length of keel for tonnage, by the main-breadth, so taken, and the product by the half-breadth, and divide the whole by 94 ; the quotient will be the tonnage."

The American method of casting the "Government-tonnage," we extract from an American publication, called, "Walsh's Mercantile Arithmetic."

"If the vessel be double-decked, take the length thereof from the fore-part of the main-stem, to the after part of the stern-post, above the upper deck ; the breadth thereof at the broadest part above the main-wales, half of which breadth shall be accounted the depth of such vessel, and then deduct from the length, 3-5 of the breadth, multiply the remainder by the breadth, and the product by the depth, and divide this last product by 95, the quotient will be the tonnage ; and if such ship or vessel be single-decked, take the length and breadth, as above directed, deduct from the length, as before, and take the depth from the under side of the deck-plank, to the ceiling in the hold, then multiply and divide as aforesaid, and the quotient shall be deemed the tonnage."

Where more than two ships are engaged, should the numbers be unequal especially, the rule of applying the tonnage, in the manner submitted by us, fails altogether. Three or four cases of this kind occur among the actions ; but we have concluded to retain the arrangement as it stands in the tables ; and point out the distinction under the respective notes.

Although, in discussing the merits of one or two of their naval actions with us, the Americans have reluctantly advanced, from the number, to the calibre, of the guns on each side ; neither men, nor size of ships, have in general, been sufficiently attractive to lead them further.

Suppose two ships, equal in metal and size, to engage ; one to have full crews for all the guns upon her broadside, marines for her gang-ways and tops, seamen enough left, to trim sails, repair running-rigging, stop shot-holes ; in short, men for every possible service in the ship : the other, to

\* See below p. 93, 102, 101.

† Main.

have men for two thirds of her guns only, scarce any for marines, and so few for working the ship, that she can neither raze, nor avoid being raked. Would this be an equal match?

Yet, to be strictly fair, every gun that cannot be manned, should be considered as a useless lump of iron, and thrown out of the estimate. Not an

American privateer-captain, but knows, as well as Mr. Clark, how to appreciate this : and publishes the guns only of the vessels he captures. A schooner of ten guns, may capture, in succession, six or eight merchant-ships, of twelve guns each : every one of which will be pronounced *superior* to herself ; yet the united crews of all, shall not out-number the single crew of the privateer.

When two ships get at each other, what signifies equality in guns? She that is most numerously manned, will invariably carry her opponent ; unless indeed, that superiority is counter-balanced by a deficiency in personal valour. Our packets, transports, and armed merchantmen, have frequently established this fact ; as many a disappointed privateers-man can testify.

Upon the whole, we submit the aggregate of the broad-side-weight of metal, men, and tonnage, to be a fair and impartial estimate of the *actual force* of the different ships : liable, at the same time, to such qualifications and exceptions as are stated in the notes.

To convey a more correct idea of the disparity in size between the ships than the tonnage alone might afford, the principal dimensions of the hull and larger spars of several have been added.

The Americans may say, we ought to include among our captured national ships, Kings' Packets. It is true, they are government-armed vessels, but not fitted out as cruizers. They are intended to act defensively only. Eighteen have been captured from us ; eight or ten of which have again come into our hands. Their commanders and crews have, on all occasions, behaved in the most gallant manner ; often repelling force more than treble their own.

Three or four revenue-schooners and cutters will be found in Table 4. Most of them were captured *cruizing* ; and had sent in prizes : thus becoming, in every sense of the term, public vessels of war.

With a nation whose marine consists chiefly of privateers, they, it may be said, should also be included among our captures ; especially, as the four small national vessels taken from us by privateers, have been included among our losses. We have had so very few vessels of that description, either fitted out, or captured, that the balance would be greatly in our favour. Another motive might operate. American privateers have never, except when treachery has favoured them, captured British vessels of more than half their own force : and have often run away from and been captured by British vessels decidedly inferior.

As to American privateers, we shall only state, that, by a list laid before Parliament in February 1815, (many returns from foreign stations still unreceived,) the number taken since the declaration of war, amount 4 to 225 carrying 1936 guns and 8674 men.





1871

1872



## NOTES.

(A)

### ALERT and ESSEX.

TO attack a ship of so formidable appearance as the *Essex*; and upon discovering her real force, still resolutely to maintain the combat; until seven feet water in the hold, and other serious injury, compelled the *Alert* to surrender, displayed a laudable zeal in Capt. T. L. P. Laugharne, his officers and ship's-company.

Having first, in the character of a cartel, landed the prisoners at Saint John Newfoundland, His Majesty's late ship *Alert* arrived at New-York. For eight years, she had been a cruizer in the service of Great-Britain; but she was deemed no acquisition to that of the United States, except as a block-ship, or transport.

The editor of the "*Naval History*" artfully qualifies his account of the capture of "the British sloop of war *Alert* of 20 guns," by calling her, in a subsequent page, "ship *Alert*, guns mounted 26;"\* although she had not even a swivel beyond her twenty.

How extremely fastidious Mr. Clark is, as to what he introduces into his "very interesting collection of facts and documents,"† will best appear by the following extract:

"On the 30th of August, the *Essex* being in lat 36 N. long, 62 W. a British frigate was discovered standing towards her under a press of sail. Porter stood for her under easy sail, with his ship prepared for action; and, apprehensive that she might not find the *Essex* during the night, he hoisted a light. At nine the British vessel made a signal. It consisted of two flashes and a blue light—she was then apparently about four miles distant—Porter stood for the point where she was seen, until midnight, when perceiving nothing of her, he concluded it would be best to heave-to for her until morning, concluding she had done the same. But to his great surprise, and the mortification of his officers and crew, she was no longer in sight. Captain Porter thought it to be not unlikely, that this vessel was the *Acasta* of 50 guns, sent out, accompanied by the *Ringdove* of 22, to cruise for the *Essex*."

The editor recounts a second vain attempt of Captain Porter, during the *Essex*'s first cruise, to bring a British squadron to action. The same eagerness for battle, and the same surprize and mortification as before, occurred here; but the names of those British run-a-ways do not appear.

Soon after the declaration of war by America. It was confidently asserted, that Capt. Porter had ill-used a British seaman for refusing to serve against his country. The following statement, taken

from a New-York paper of June the 27th 1812, will tend to clear any remaining doubts on the subject.

The deposition states, that John Erving was born in New-Castle-upon-Tyne, England; that he has resided within the United States since 1800, and has never been naturalized; that on the 14th of October 1811, he entered on board the *Essex*, and joined her at Norfolk; that Captain Porter on the 25th of June 1812, caused all hands to be piped on deck, to take the oath of allegiance to the United States, and gave them to understand, that any man who did not choose to do so should be discharged; that when deponent heard his name called, he told the captain, that being a British subject, he must refuse taking the oath; on which the captain spoke to the petty-officers, and told them they must pass sentence upon him; that they then put him into the petty launch which lay alongside the frigate, and there poured a bucket of tar over him, and then laid on a quantity of feathers, having first stripped him naked from the waist; that they then rowed him ashore, stern foremost, and landed him. That he wandered about from street to street, in this condition, until Mr Ford took him into his shop, to save him from the crowd then beginning to gather; that he staid there until the police magistrate took him away, and put him in the city-prison for protection; where he was cleansed and clothed. None of the citizens molested or insulted him. He says he had a protection which he bought of a man in Salem, of the same name and description with himself, for four shillings and sixpence, which he got renewed at the custom-house, Norfolk. He says he gave as an additional reason to the captain, why he did not choose to fight against his country, that if he should be taken prisoner, he would certainly be hung."

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(B)

## GUERRIERE and CONSTITUTION.

A succession of naval victories, too easily obtained, had made us opinionated. Inattention to duty crept in, and soon spread its torpid influence throughout the navy in general. The situation of gunner on board our ships became almost a sinecure. A twenty year's war was, of itself, sufficient to wear out the strength of our seamen; but a laxity of discipline in all the essentials of a man-of-war's-man, produced a much more sensible effect.

Instead of the sturdy occupation of handling the ship's guns, the men were taught to burnish up the traversing-bars, carronade-screws, and every other article susceptible of polish upon the quarter-deck. Those of the crew that escaped this footman's occupation, (expressly forbidden by an order of the board of Admiralty,) were set to reefing and un-reefing the top-sails, by a stop-watch, for the amusement of the captain and his friends.

A show of force being required, in order to keep in check the ill-disturbed of Europe, ships were contracted for, and hastily built up, without any regard to sailing or strength of bulwark; then, badly fitted-out, and manned, almost wholly, with an imprinted crew of raw lands and small boys, sent forth to assert the rights, and maintain the character of Britons upon the ocean!—Our navy at this time, amounted to no less than seven hundred and fifty ships, in commission; but the total of the men they employed, fit for service, would barely man half the number.

While contempt for all her maritime foes was thus enervating the naval power of Great-Britain, an opposite impulse was working a salutary effect upon that of America. While we retrograded, she advanced, with steps almost as rapid. The ships of the United States were constructed upon the most approved principles, both for sailing and for war. Justly considering that the ramparts of a battery, whether aloft or ashore, should have for one object, the shelter of the men stationed at it, the Americans built up the sides of their ships in the most compact manner. Every other essential in the equipment of a ship of war, was minutely attended to; and the *rates* of the ships were fixed, so as best to conceal their force from the rest of the world.

With respect to seamen, they had for three or four years previous to the war, been decoying our men, by the most artful stratagems. The best of these were promoted to petty-officers; and, no doubt, when the war commenced, more than half the seamen in the American service, were natives of the United Kingdom; and a great proportion of the remainder, men who had been taught to brave danger in every shape, by fighting in her fleets.

Highly to the credit of the naval administration of the United States, the men were taught the practical rules of gunnery; and ten shot, with the necessary powder, were allowed to be expended in play, to make one hit in earnest.

Then, the American marines deserve a distinct consideration. In the United States, every man may hunt or shoot among the wild animals of the forest. The young backwoods-man carries a *rifle*, the moment he can lift one to his shoulder; and wee to the duck or deer that attempts to pass him at a hundred and fifty yards. To collect, and give the *finish*, to these expert marksmen, a marine-barrack is established near the city of Washington; from which the ships are regularly supplied, when ready for sea. A deserter from the British would here be no acquisition.

Thus situated were the ships of the two nations, when the ill-fated *Guerriere*, with sprung bowsprit, a diminished complement, and imminently wanting that thorough rent for which she was then speeding to Halifax, encountered the American ship *Constitution*; manned with picked seamen, and equipped in every point, as a fighting ship should be.

The *Constitution* came down before the wind; the *Guerriere* backed her main-top-sail, and awaited the attack.

The British and American accounts differ by one hour as to the period at which the action commenced. By dividing the interval, we fix it at ten minutes before five P.M.

It is agreed, that the *Guerriere* began firing several minutes before the *Constitution* ; and the American account adds, " without effect, her shot falling short."

According to Captain Hull's letter, it was fifty five minutes past five, before he " got fairly alongside." So that for one hour and five minutes, the *Constitution's* broadside of seventeen long twenty-fours was directed against the *Guerriere* ; out of range of whose eighteen-pounders, the former was enabled to keep, by having the weather-gage.

At about ten minutes past six, the *Guerriere's* mizen-mast fell over the starboard side, bringing the ship up in the wind against her helm. This exposed her to a heavy raking fire ; while the grape-shot, and the riflemen in the *Constitution's* tops, were sweeping her upper-deck.

At twenty five minutes past six, the *Guerriere* fell on board the enemy, with her bowsprit foul of his mizen rigging. The boarders were called : but the sea ran too high to make the attempt. The ships then got clear. A few of the how-guns were now brought to bear, and the enemy's cabin caught fire ; but soon afterwards the *Guerriere's* fore and main-masts went over the starboard side, completely disabling the guns, and leaving the ship an unmanageable wreck. This was at thirty minutes past six ; when the firing on both sides ceased. " The *Constitution*," says the American account, " then set fore-sail and mainsail, and hauled to the eastward to repair damages ; all our braces, and much of our standing and running rigging, and some of our spars, being shot away."

At forty five minutes past six, the *Constitution* having again placed herself in a raking position on the *Guerriere's* bow ; and Capt. Dacres and his few remaining officers justly considering, that any further resistance would be a needless waste of lives, the jack was lowered from the stump of the mizen-mast.

" At seven," says the *Constitution's* log, " wore ship, and stood under the lee of the prize : sent our boat on board, which returned at eight, with Capt. Dacres, late of U.S.M. ship *Guerriere*, mounting 42 carriage-guns, and manned with 302 men."

The *Guerriere's* mizen-mast fell wholly by the enemy's shot. The fall of the fore-mast, however, was partly attributable to a previous loss of rigging, to the rotten condition of the few remaining shrouds, and to the sprung state of the bowsprit ; assisted also by the heavy sea that was running. The main-mast received no injury whatever by shot. It fell along with the foremast ; and was discovered to be perfectly hollow and rotten in the centre, where it broke off. This mast had been struck by lightning at the head, several months previous ; but no superficial marks of damage were then visible.

In her hull, the *Guerriere* was much injured. She had been a French ship ; and so slight was her scuttling, that several men stationed upon the main-deck, were killed by grape-shot which had passed through her side :

while her round shot were to be seen sticking in the side of the *Constitution*.

Besides the guns disabled by the fall of the masts and the enemy's fire, the breechings of several parted from sheer rottenness ; and there was no rope left in the ship, wherewith to renew them.

The utmost efforts of the Americans could not save the *Guerriere*. At 3 o'clock P.M. on the following day, she was set fire to ; and at a quarter past, blew up : an irrefragable proof, that she had been bravely defended.

The *Guerriere's* loss of men in the action was, her second lieutenant, (two only on board,) and fourteen seamen and marines, killed ; her commander, master, two master's mates, and twenty-eight seamen and marines, severely, and her first lieutenant, two midshipmen, and twenty-eight seamen and marines, slightly wounded : total killed and wounded 78. About six of her badly wounded died afterwards.

The *Constitution's* loss in the action was, a lieutenant of marines and six men killed ; a lieutenant and six men severely, and the master and seven men slightly wounded : total killed and wounded 22. Several underwent amputation ; and two or three died after the action. The American account notices the severely wounded only ; while, every man wounded in our service, however slightly, being entitled to, what is called, *smart money*, none are left out in the returns.

The *Guerriere's* armament consisted of thirty long eighteens upon the main-deck, one twelve, and sixteen thirty-two pounder, carronades, and two long nines, upon the quarter-deck and fore-castle : total 49.\* But two of her eighteen-pounders were of no use to her upon the broadside. Like most French-built ships, she sailed very much by the head. To assist in giving her that trim ; and to obviate the inconvenience, whenever a chace-gun was to be fired, of a round-house which intervened between the fore-most and bridle-ports, and prevented the fore-most gun from being, as usual, run out forward, the two eighteen-pounders found in the *Guerriere's* bridle-ports, were taken on board at Halifax. Her twelve-pounder-carronade, fitted upon an elevating carriage, remained to the last with its first load in, owing to the priming-iron being too large. The *Guerriere*, too, was esteemed one of our *crack* frigates !

Of men and boys, the *Guerriere* had originally belonging to her, 302 ; but Lieut. Puhlman, a lieutenant of marines, three midshipmen, and thirty three seamen and marines, were absent from the ship in prizes. So that on the day of the action, she victualled, exclusive of four or five women and some prisoners, 261. Of these, seven were Americans, who had been in the ship some years. Capt. Dacres, with a proper sense of their situation, gave orders that they should go below. One only who was forward, and did not hear the word pass, remained at his station ; the rest retired, and were not in the action. This left at quarters 258 ; of which, *nineteen* were boys. The account here given, is taken from the purser's steward ; who served out the rations of the ship.

The *Guerriere* had 200 as good men, as perhaps could be selected from many of our line-of-battle ships. She was, in this respect, an exception to ships of her class. Every art was practised to seduce

\*When Captain Skene had her, she mounted two additional brass twelves.

her crew from their allegiance. Sixteen or eighteen of them were foreigners, and persons who had been pressed in their way out to the States. The remainder remained in America; and some of them enlisted on board the Constitution. Most of the crew, however, returned to Halifax: and about twenty five passed into the Shannon; where they found ample relief for their wounded pride, in the subsequent achievement of that ship.

The Constitution's armament consisted of thirty long twenty-fours upon the main-deck, twenty two thirty-two pounder carronades, and two long (English) eighteens, bored to carry a twenty-four pounder shot, upon the quarter-deck and fore-castle. These two long guns were shifting, and both fought upon the broadside; one through the gang-way port; the other, a port upon the fore-castle. She had ports all along the gang-ways, similar to our razees and new fifties, but they were filled up with hammocks.

Captain Dacres, in his letter, says the Constitution mounted two more carronades; but of several individuals who repeatedly counted her guns, all concur in stating them precisely as given above. With the addition of an elevating carronade, it will be seen, she mounted the same in her action with the Java.

Although she mounts no guns in her tops, similar to the other American forty-fours, a deliberate contrivance for destruction was resorted to; of which many were the victims on board the Guerriere. Seven men were stationed in each top; six of whom were employed in loading for him that was the best marksman.

On leaving Boston, seventeen days previous to the action, the Constitution had about 476 in crew: but, having recaptured, and manned in, a prize to the Avenger sloop of war, she victualled on the morning of the action, exclusive of prisoners, 468. Among these, there was scarcely one that would rate as a boy on board our ships.

The American official account of this action is a novel production; not so much for its inconsistencies, as for its omitting to give the force, either in guns or men, of the captured frigate.

The first mention of the Guerriere's name by Captain Hull is in the following paragraph of his letter:

"After informing you that so fine a ship as the Guerriere, commanded by an able and experienced officer, had been totally dismantled, and otherwise cut to pieces, in the short space of thirty minutes, you can have no doubt of the gallantry, &c."—What language would Captain Hull have used, had he succeeded in capturing a ship of his own force?—ay, one ever greatly his superior? His cool and reflecting mind had taught him, that in leaving all to inference, his victory would be magnified ten-fold by his triumphant countrymen.

How artfully he dates the commencement of the action from the period only, at which he "got fairly alongside." Were his seventeen long twenty-fours of use to him, for one hour, at least, before he ventured to approach his better opponent? Why did he not bear down sooner;—he had the weather-gage?

Suppose two ships to meet at sea, of the same numerical force, one armed with long guns, the other with carronades, or with long guns of a lighter calibre. Let the former, with or without a slight superiority in sailing, have the weather-gage. The moment he gets his adversary under the con-



mand of his battery, he begins firing; and, if he is a good marksman, will, in half an hour, reduce her to the same plight in which the *Guerriere* was. Seeing her masts tottering, her guns disabled, and her hull shattered, he valiantly bears down, and gets "fairly alongside." In five minutes, all three masts fall over her side; and in five minutes more, she strikes. Has not the conqueror as good a right to boast of having "totally dismantled and otherwise cut to pieces" his opponent in ten minutes, as Captain Hull to say the same of the *Guerriere* in thirty?

Although the editor of the "Naval History" had probably laying on his table, the published extract of the Constitution's log, wherein it is stated, that her fire commenced "at twenty minutes past five," and ended "at thirty minutes past six," this "zealous contributor to national character" has not scrupled to assert, that the *Guerriere* struck her colours in "thirty minutes after the commencement of the action."†

Among many hundred ideal representations of Captain Hull's "fine ship *Guerriere*," few exceed in brilliancy that contained in a resolution of "the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States."

The object was, to make a present to Capt. Hull, his officers and crew, for, in a ship "of 44 guns, attacking, vanquishing, and capturing the British frigate *Guerriere*, mounting 54 guns."

The Americans had reason indeed, to rejoice at the capture of a British frigate. On several accounts, no frigate in the service could have been a more desirable trophy, than the one they did take. Our vanity wanted a check; and that check it received in the loss of the *Guerriere*. Yet, poignant as were our feelings, it soon became evident, that the 19th of August 1812, would prove a day of renovation to the navy of Great-Britain.

Through such a mass of ships, however, the progress of amendment would necessarily be slow. A real scarcity of seamen retarded the operation; and unfortunately, the ships that were the least interested in preparations to meet the Americans, had the first pick of the men. When, therefore, Peace was concluded with the United States, not more than half our frigates had improved, either in men, gunnery, or appointments; and as to our eighteen-gun brigs, it would require another three year's war, to render them as efficient as their implied force, the characters of their officers, and the lives of the men, imperiously demanded.

The old-fashioned plan of closing with our opponent in battle, especially in fleet-actions, rendered almost nugatory the gunner's art. Three or four round shot were rammed into the gun, the carriage laid square to the ship's side; and, as soon as her broad side came parallel to her adversary's and almost touched it, the discharge took place. Dreadful was the effect: often the master was said to have pointed the guns.

How many gunners in the navy know, even now, that in the case

where a single round shot, with one fourth powder, and fired at an elevation of two degrees, will range 1020 yards, two shot, with the same proportion of powder and degrees of elevation, will range only 550? Or, that a difference of 5 degrees in the elevation, makes a difference of nearly a thousand yards in the range of a shot? All this respects range only;—how much better taught are the majority of our seamen, as to hitting an object, at even a moderate distance?

The Constitution was built at Boston in 1797—3; and cost, as we are informed by the American “Naval History,” 302,718 dollars. 84 cents, or £68,111. 14s. sterling, nearly as much as a British 74. Her principal dimensions will be found in the table. The Guerriere was taken from the French in 1806, her dimensions are also given.

A comparison of the numbers in the two columns of *actual force* in Table I, will shew a disparity in the Constitution’s favour, of nearly a third. But in that estimate, no allowance is made for the crippled, half-fitted state, in which the Guerriere commenced action; nor for the essential difference there is, between the practical gunner and (we regret to say) the mere novice.

As it may be not less amusing, than instructive, to understand by what species of logic, the Americans have persuaded themselves, that their frigates and ours are of equal force, we shall cite a work, “which owes nothing to fiction, nothing to artful disposition of drapery, to affected attitude, or to gaudy, over-heightened colouring; but is all matter of authentic history.” The reader will not be surprised, at this being the “Naval History”; nor that the above compliment paid to it, should form part of the “Criticism,” which occupies the three first pages.

“Much having been said on the disparity of force between the American 44-gun frigates and the British 38, the rates of the Constitution and Guerriere, it will, perhaps, not be out of place here, to give a comparative view of the force of each. Both the American 44-gun ships and the British 38-gun ships are constructed on the same principles, and their guns are placed in the same relative position, forming batteries of a similar nature. The guns in each ship are placed on the main or gun-deck, the quarter-deck and the fore-castle. The gun-deck, which may be considered as the line of defence, is about 176 feet long in the American 44-gun ships, and about 160 feet\* in the English 38-gun ships. The line of defence, therefore, in the American 44-gun ships, exceeds the English by about 16 feet. But, it is to be observed, that the length of the line of defence by no means implies strength. This essentially consists in the number of guns that can be placed in battery, with advantage in a given line, and the strength of the ramparts and parapets, in which light the sides of the ship may be considered. A line of defence of 200 feet, mounting 30 guns in battery, would be about one fourth weaker, and produce an effect one fourth less, than a line of defence of one hundred and fifty feet long, mounting

\*Quarrel, 11. 2. 2. 1. 1. 1.

the same number of guns. The American 44-gun ships mount 20 twenty-four pounders on the gun-deck, 24 thirty-two pounder carronades, and two eighteen pounders,\* on their quarter-deck and fore-castle, or upper decks. The British 38-gun ships mount 28 eighteen pounders on their gun-deck, 18 thirty-two pound carronades, and 2 eighteen pounders, on their quarter-deck and fore-castle, besides a 24 pounder shifting gun.† In an engagement between ship and ship, the effect produced is by the broad-side, or the number of guns placed in battery on one side of the ship. So that only half the number of guns in a ship can be considered as placed in battery in its length or line of defence. The number of guns, therefore, of the American 44-gun ships, placed in battery in its line of defence of 176 feet, will be 28. The number of guns in the English 38-gun ships, placed in battery in its line of defence of 160 feet, will be 24; but as they carry a shifting gun, which may be placed in battery on either side, the number will actually be 25. So that the number of guns in battery in the American 44-gun ships, will exceed those in the English 38-gun ships, only one tenth. But the American line of defence is one tenth longer, and consequently would be one tenth weaker than the English, if it had only the same number of guns in battery: consequently, the force of each, when the line of defence and number of guns placed in battery are considered, is about equal.”

“The American 44-gun ships carry twenty-four pounders on their gun-decks, the English, eighteen pounders. But are not eighteen pounders of sufficient weight of metal for the service of large frigates, and fully calculated to produce every effect that may be required in an engagement between frigates?—It has, moreover, been asserted by the officers of the *Constitution* that the shot of the *Java*’s eighteen pounders‡ were only three pounds lighter than those of the American twenty-four pounders, after accurately weighing them both. So that, consequently, the difference in weight of metal was only one eighth.”

“It has been asserted in the British newspapers, that the American frigates were 74’s in disguise. It has also been asserted by an English naval commander,§ in his official letter, that the American 44-gun ships were built with the scantling of a 74. If, by this assertion, he meant to insinuate that the American 44-gun ships were of the same nature with a 74 or ships of the line, he has manifested an extreme want of candour or want of professional knowledge. 74-gun ships are all of the line, that is, they have guns mounted on two gun-decks, extending the whole length of the ship, or its line of defence, besides those on the quarter-deck and fore-castle; and, in addition to these, there are guns on the poop.|| The length of the line of a 74 is a-

\*This armament was at one time ordered by Congress, but subsequently altered.

†See above p. 9.

‡Most probably some old French eighteen pounder that had been, by accident, left on board.

§Captain Carden.

||Quite a new definition of a “ship of the line.”

bout the same as that of the American 44-gun ship. A 74 gun ship mounts about 88 guns: consequently, the number of guns placed in battery in her line of defence, will be 44 guns; and in the American frigate of 44 guns, only 28 in the same line of defence. Consequently, the strength of the line of defence of a 74, is not very far from double that of an American 44-gun ship, considered in respect of the number of guns; without taking into consideration, the difference in weight of metal, and the compactness and strength of sides."

"This, we believe, sufficiently demonstrates the illiberality and absurdity of comparing the American 44-gun frigates to British 74's, with a view to disparage the rising glory of the American navy; and to depreciate the noble exploits of her gallant tars."\*

Mr Clark's last sentence reminds us of having omitted to state, that several of the Constitution's crew were recognized by the Guerriere's, as old shipmates and countrymen. One fellow, in particular, who was making up buck-shot cartridges, had served under the first lieutenant. Had every ship's company in the service an opportunity, at that time, of inspecting the Constitution's crew, how many, besides the commissioned officers, would have proved to be native Americans?

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(C.)

### FROLIC and WASP.

The Frolic, having under convoy six homeward bound vessels from the bay of Honduras, and being in lat. 36° N. and long. 61° W. was overtaken by a violent gale of wind, in which she carried away her main-yard, lost her top-sails, and sprung the main-top-mast. On the morning of the 18th. while repairing the damages sustained in the storm, and re-assembling the scattered ships, a suspicious ship came in sight, and gave chase to the convoy.

The merchant-ships continued their voyage before the wind, under all sail; the Frolic dropped astern, and hoisted Spanish colours, to decoy the stranger under her guns, and to give time for the convoy to escape.†

The Frolic had been cruising in the West-Indies several months. She left Port-Royal, Jamaica, before the war with America was known there; and had since heard of it only by rumour, which was not credited. She had thirty two men short of complement; and her remaining crew, officers and all, were so much affected by the climate, that they could scarcely perform the routine of the service. The men did their best, however, to remove the main-yard, (which

was on deck being fished,) partly out of the way of the guns. Their hearts were good, but their efforts were feeble.

As the American account of this action has the merit of being, at least, circumstantial, we here give it at length :

“ At thirty two minutes past eleven, the *Wasp* came down to-windward on the larboard side of the *Frolic*. When within about sixty yards she hailed. The *Frolic* then hauled down Spanish colours ; hoisted the British ensign : and opened a fire of cannon and musketry. This was instantly returned by the *Wasp* ; and, nearing the enemy, the action became close and spirited. About four or five minutes after the commencement of the action, the main-top-mast of the *Wasp* was shot away, and having fallen with the main-top-sail yard, across the larboard fore and fore-top-sail braces, rendered her head yards unmanageable during the remainder of the engagement. In two or three minutes more, her gaff and mizen-top-gallant-sail were shot away. She however kept up a close and constant fire. The sea was so rough that the muzzles of the *Wasp*'s guns were frequently under water. The Americans fired as the side of their ship was going down. Their shot, of course, either struck the *Frolic*'s deck or below it. The English fired as their vessel rose. Their balls consequently only struck the rigging, or were ineffectual. The *Wasp*, having now shot ahead of the *Frolic*, poured a broadside into her, which completely raked her. She then took a position on the *Frolic*'s larboard bow. A most spirited fire was now kept up from the *Wasp*. It produced great effect. The fire of the *Frolic* had slackened so much, that Capt. Jones gave up his intention of boarding her, lest both vessels might be endangered by the roughness of the sea. But, in the course of a few minutes more, not a brace of the *Wasp* was left. All had been shot away. Her rigging was so much torn to pieces, that Capt. Jones was afraid that her masts, being unsupported, would go by the board ; and the *Frolic* thereby be enabled to escape. He therefore resolved to board, and at once decide the contest. With this intention he wore ship and ran down upon the enemy. The vessels struck each other. The *Wasp*'s side rubbed along the *Frolic*'s bow. The jib-boom of the latter entered between the main and mizen rigging of the *Wasp*, directly over the heads of Capt. Jones and his first lieutenant, Biddle, who were then standing together, near the capstan. The *Frolic* now lay in so good a position for being raked, that it was resolved not to board until another broadside had been poured into her. So near were the two vessels, that while the men were loading the guns, the rammers of the *Wasp* were pushed against the *Frolic*'s sides ; and two of her guns went through the bow-ports of the *Frolic*, and swept the whole length of her deck. About this time, Jack Lang, a brave and intrepid seaman of the *Wasp*, and who had once been impressed by a British man-of-war, jumped on a gun with his cutlass, and was springing on board the *Frolic*, when Captain Jones desiring to fire again before boarding, called him down. But, probably urged on by his impetuosity, he did not hear the command of his captain, and was immediately on the bowsprit of the *Frolic*. Lieutenant Biddle perceiving the ardour and enthusiasm of the *Wasp*'s crew, mounted on the hammock-cloth to board. The crew immediately followed. But the lieutenant's feet being entangled in the rigging of the *Frolic*'s bowsprit, and midshipman Baker, in his ardour to board, laying hold of his coat, he fell back on the *Wasp*'s deck. He directly sprang up, and as the next swell of the sea brought the *Frolic* nearer, he got on her bowsprit when Lang and

another seaman were already. He passed them on the fore-castle; and was much surprised at not seeing a single man alive upon the Frolic's deck, except the seaman at the wheel and three officers. The deck was slippery with blood: and strowed with dead bodies. As he went forward, the captain of the Frolic, and two other officers who were standing on the quarter-deck, threw down their swords, and made an inclination of their bodies as a sign of submission. The colours of the Frolic were still flying. None of her seamen probably dared to go into the rigging, to strike them, for fear of the musketry of the Wasp. Lieut. Biddle, himself immediately jumped into the rigging, and hauled down the British ensign. Possession was taken of the Frolic forty three minutes after the commencement of the action. She presented a most shocking spectacle. Her birth-deck was crowded with dead, wounded, and dying. Not above twenty of her crew escaped unhurt."\*

The disabled condition of the Frolic previous to the engagement, and which, no doubt, first tempted the American to approach her, forms no part of Mr Clark's narrative. Its effect upon her, from the very onset of the action, Capt. Whinyates thus describes:

"The superior fire of our guns gave every reason to expect its speedy termination in our favour, but the gaff-head braces being shot away, and there being no sail on the main-mast, the brig became unmanageable, and the enemy succeeded in taking a position to rake her, while she was unable to bring a gun to bear."

"After lying some time exposed to a most destructive fire, she fell with the bowsprit betwixt the enemy's main and mizen rigging, still unable to return his fire. At length the enemy boarded, and made himself master of the brig, every individual officer being wounded, and the greater part of the men either killed or wounded, there not remaining twenty persons unhurt. Although I shall ever deplore the unhappy issue of this contest, it would be great injustice to the merits of the officers and crew, if I failed to report, that their bravery and coolness are deserving of every praise; and I am convinced, if the Frolic had not been crippled in the gale, I should have to make a very different report to your Excellency.† The Wasp was taken, and the Frolic re-captured the same afternoon by H. M. S. Poictiers."

The loss of the Wasp's main-top-mast in five minutes after the action commenced, proves that the Frolic's shot, before she came up in the wind, were not altogether "ineffectual." The Americans, wishing it to be inferred, that they also were disabled, represent the falling of the main-top-sail yard upon the braces, as rendering their head-yards unmanageable. A seaman at this moment observes, that the Wasp's men must have been lubbers indeed, if they could not clear the braces in three minutes; that, were they even shot away entirely, the yards could be worked by the bow-lines; and that, with the mizen-top-sail still aloft, and the advantage of the weather-gage, the American ship could command what position she choosed. However, Messieurs Jones and Biddle did not imagine, perhaps, that their statement would be thus criticised, or they would have been more particular in drawing it up.

What a parallel about this boarding exploit. One hundred and thirty Americans, with *scabbs-shins*, to board, in the very teeth of four Britons, two of whom were severely wounded. Another of Captain Jones' preparatory

broad-sides might have cleared the deck of these few; and then the ardour and enthusiasm of the *Wasp's* crew, would have had *all* dead bodies to triumph over.

Captain Whinnyates, and the second lieutenant, Edward Medley, were severely wounded; the latter in four or five places. These truly brave men, bleeding profusely, would not quit their stations; but supported themselves against opposite sides of the capstan, aided by the points of their swords in the deck. What a spectacle!—When the enemy came rushing over the mangled bodies towards the quarter-deck, the two officers threw down their swords; and “the inclination of their bodies” became the natural consequence of their now unsupported state.

The boarding-officer ordered one of the *Frolic's* petty-officers to haul down the colours; but the man peremptorily refused,—alleging, that he had not been accustomed to do such things. This bold reply excited in the breast of the American, wrath, instead of sympathy; and the gallant seaman was very near sharing the fate of his mess-mates.

The *Frolic's* first lieutenant and muster were among the killed. The total of killed and wounded (several from buck-shot) amounted to 69;—nearly three fourths of her brave crew. The slaughter would have been still greater, had not Captain Whinnyates, soon after the brig got foul of the enemy so that her guns could not bear, ordered the men to go below, out of reach of the merciless riles, and the sweeping broadsides, of his too fortunate opponent. Did the *Frolic*, at the time of getting entangled, possess only the number of men unhurt, with which she began the action, how long would *they* have deliberated about boarding the *Wasp*?

The *Wasp*, by the American account, lost five killed and five wounded. Several others were wounded; although, as usual, not in their estimate.

The *Frolic* mounted sixteen thirty-two pounder carronades, and two long sixes; besides a twelve-pounder boat-carronade, which was fitted so as to be fired upon either broadside. Like all other brigs of her class, without exception, she had nine gun-ports, and a bridle, on each side. Her crew, as stated before, consisted only of 89; and of them a great proportion were boys.

The *Wasp's* armament consisted of double that specified in the calibre-column of the table. One hundred and thirty of her crew were received, unhurt, by the agent for prisoners at Bermuda. This gives her, according to their own account, 140 in the action. Two men, it appears, were lost overboard on the 15th. She had therefore a complement of at least 142. (and those all picked men,) on leaving the Delaware, five days before the action.

Her boatswain and boatswain's mate proved to be deserters; one from the *Cambrian*, the other from the *Cleopatra*. Ten of the crew were also detained as British subjects; but on the principle, perhaps, that ninety-nine traitors had better escape, than one prisoner of war lose his life, the evidence was not deemed sufficient to convict any of them.

The comparative size of the *Wasp* and *Frolic* will be found in the table of dimensions. The bulwarks of the former were more compact than a 28-gun frigate's; and her quarters, generally, far superior to those of any sloop-of-war in the service.

Even the circumstance of the *Frolic* having a convoy in charge, was not lost on the commander of the *Wasp*. He made out that convoy of them were large ships, and well manned, including from 10 to 18 guns each. He paid

Jones, notwithstanding, resolved to attack them. The convoy made their escape. The sloop-of-war alone remained. She proved to be the Frolic, Captain Whinyates, mounting 22 guns, with a crew of about 120 men."\*

In guns, the two vessels may be considered aequal. The state of preparation, however, in which one was, and the state of uncertainty as to war, in which the other was, alone created a decided disparity. When to that is added, that, while the Wasp was fully rigged, the Frolic was crippled by a gale; and to that again, that, while the former had one hundred and forty men, in full health, the latter had eighty-nine only,—and those sick and emaciated, the reader himself can make the best estimate, of the comparative force of the Wasp and Frolic.

Mr. Clark winds up his *authentic* statement, thus : — the crews of both vessels were about equal. The British vessel mounted four more guns than the American. This action has completely demonstrated the superior skill and merit of the American naval officers and seamen."†

Deceived by this, and a thousand other misrepresentations, the most moderate American, while he may be brought to doubt the equality of some of the actions, will not fail exultingly to remind you,—that in that of the Wasp and Frolic, "the superiority of force certainly was on the side of the British."

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(D)

## MACEDONIAN and UNITED STATES.

In this case, unfortunately, although our ship had the weather-gage, she was cut to pieces by long shot. The sentence of the Court-Martial upon Captain Carden notices the fact thus :

"The Court is of opinion that previous to the commencement of the action, from an over-anxiety to keep the weather-gage, an opportunity was lost of closing with the enemy; and that owing to this circumstance the Macedonian was unable to bring the United States to close action, until she had received material damage; but as it does not appear that this omission originated in the most distant wish to keep back from the engagement, the Court is of opinion, that Captain J. S. Carden, his officers and ship's-company, in every instance throughout the action, behaved with the firmest and most determined courage, resolution, and coolness, and that the colours of the Macedonian were not struck, until she was unable to make further resistance."

The American account says,—“The Macedonian being to windward, had the advantage of engaging at her own distance. This was so great, that for the first half hour the United States did not use her carronades. At no time was the Macedonian within such distance as to admit of musketry and grape being used with good effect. Owing to this circumstance, and a heavy swell of the sea, the action lasted an hour and a half.”‡

\* Am. N. H. vol. 1. p. 102.

† Ibid. 105.

‡ Ibid. p. 106.



One part of this story is erroneous ; for long before the action ended, the Macedonian's surgeon extracted from the right arm-pit of a midshipman, an iron shot weighing twelve ounces.

The injuries which the Macedonian received, are thus detailed by Captain Carden :

"After an hour's action, the enemy backed and came to the wind, and I was then enabled to bring her to close battle. In this situation, I soon found the enemy's force too superior to expect success, unless some very fortunate chance occurred in our favor ; and with this hope, I continued the battle to two hours and ten minutes : when having the mizen-mast shot away by the board, top-masts shot away by the caps, main-yard shot in pieces, lower-masts badly wounded, lower rigging all cut to pieces, a small proportion only of the fore-sail left to the fore-yard, all the guns on the quarter-deck and fore-castle disabled but two, and filled with wreck, two also on the main-deck disabled, and several shot between wind and water, a very great proportion of the crew killed and wounded, and the enemy comparatively in good order, who had now shot ahead, and was about to place himself in a raking position, without our being able to return the fire, being a perfect wreck and unmanageable log ; I deemed it prudent, though a painful extremity, to surrender his Majesty's ship."

The Macedonian lost her boatswain, a master's mate, and thirty four seamen and marines, killed ; her first and second lieutenants, and sixty six seamen and marines, wounded ; total 104.

The United States suffered in masts and rigging ; but not much in her hull. She lost five killed, and seven badly wounded ; two of whom, one a lieutenant, died of their wounds. Her slightly wounded are not enumerated.

The Macedonian's establishment of guns was, twenty-eight long eighteens, one twelve, and sixteen thirty-two pounder carronades, and two long nines ; total 47. But Captain Carden, on taking the command of her, brought on board two long brass twelves, and got the nines exchanged for two thirty-two pounder carronades ; which increased her guns to 49.

She had on board at the commencement of the action, two hundred and seventy-nine officers, seamen and marines, eight foreigners out of a French regiment for a band, and sixteen boys ; total 303.

The United States mounted thirty long twenty-four's (English ship-guns) upon the main-deck ; one twelve-pounder carronade for firing into the tops, twenty two forty-two pounder carronades, and two long twenty-fours, both fought on one side as in the Constitution, upon the quarter-deck and fore-castle ; also two four-pounders in the fore-top, two in the main-top, and one in the mizen-top ; making a total of 60 guns. The top-guns were mounted upon pivots, so as to be fired on either broadside ; and, aided by the rides, became a very destructive battery.

It was stated in a New-York paper of May 1812 : that the com-

mander of the United States, finding in his ship a disposition to hog, had reduced her guns from "fifty four" to forty eight. Commodore Decatur, also, in his proposition for a contest with the *Endymion*, mentions his "twelve-pounder carronade." Captain Carden's account of the force of the United States upon her decks, therefore receives confirmation. As to the howitzers in her tops, similar ones, in number and calibre, were found on board the *President*; and she is called a sister-ship to the United States.

Having made no captures previous to her falling in with the *Macedonian*, the United States had on board her full complement of men; which, by Captain Carden's account, consisted of 478 picked seamen.

That a great proportion of these were deserters from the British navy, one fact puts beyond a doubt. Many of the main-deck guns of the United States, were named after ships and actions in which the men had fought. One of the *Macedonian's* boys, William Hearne, a native of London, actually found among the hostile crew, —his own brother! This hardened traitor, after reviling the British, and applauding the American service, invited his brother to enter the latter. The honorable youth replied, with tears in his eyes, —"if you are a rascal, that's no reason I should be one."

Shattered as the *Macedonian* was, Commodore Decatur, much to his credit, contrived not only to render her sea-worthy, but to conduct her home in safety, from lat.  $29^{\circ}$  N. and long.  $25^{\circ} 30'$  W. The two ships arrived off Montaug on the 4th of December; but did not reach New-York until new-year's day. It was singular that, during a seven week's passage over such an extent of sea, not one British cruiser, out of the many hundreds afloat, should have crossed their path.

The ships remained some time at New-London; where the *Macedonian's* crew were allowed to wander at large, in hopes they would enter the American service. Some did enlist, but not so many as reported. As to the band, they of course, where country was indifferent, had, from the first, preferred the victor to the vanquished. If we except 'Hail Columbia' and 'Yankee-doodle,' they had no new tunes to learn; and soon struck up as 'Decatur's march,' what they had often played as—'The battle of the Nile.'

The *Macedonian* was contract-built, yet esteemed one of the finest frigates of her class in the British navy. Her dimensions, both in hull and spars, will be found in Table 7.

The United States was built in Philadelphia, and launched in the summer of 1797. According to Mr. Clark, she cost 299,536 dollars, 56 cents, or £67350. 11. 7. sterling. That she is equal in size to the *President*, we infer from her American tonnage, as given by Commodore Decatur's biographer,\* agreeing with what the Commodore himself has since stated to be the measurement of that ship,

\**Analectic Magazine*.

namely, 1440. In an official report of the secretary of the American navy, the tonnage of the President, more accurately estimated perhaps, is called 1444; and, upon applying the American rule of casting the tonnage to the President's dimensions, 1444 is the amount obtained. Were any argument to be drawn from the expence of building, the fact of the United States having cost a full fourth more than the President,\* would argue that the former was the larger of the two.

Although we cannot but regret that, owing to a want of skill on our part, more execution was not done to the enemy in the action of the Macedonian and United States, the latter's decided superiority of force, affords to the Americans no reasonable cause of exultation. By a method of calculation peculiar to themselves, however, the American government have considered the two ships as equally matched; and, agreeably to the provisions of their new prize-act, awarded to the conquerors, the full value of the captured frigate.

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(E.)

### JAVA and CONSTITUTION.

Just put in commission and hastily manned, the Java was fitted out to convey a governor and his staff, and a cargo of copper and other stores to Bombay.

Previous to the ship leaving Spithead, her gallant commander did his utmost to get exchanged, the indifferent hands with which she was chiefly manned, for even tolerable seamen. Captain Lambert's urgent applications were, however, unheeded; and, with a force which, numerically considered, made her superior to most frigates of her class, the Java was about the least efficient thirty-eight in the service. At this time too, the Guerriere's loss had been known in London upwards of seven weeks.

The action between the Java and Constitution, was fought off the coast of Brazil, on the 29th of December. We shall give first the American account of it, extracted from Mr. Clark's book† :

"At a quarter past one, the ship in sight proving to be an English frigate, and being sufficiently distant from land, Commodore Bainbridge ordered the mainsails and royals to be taken in, to tack ship and stand for the enemy; who soon bore down with an intention of raking the Constitution, which she avoided by wearing. At 2 o'clock, P. M. the British ship was within half-a-mile of the Constitution, and to windward. She now hauled down her colours, ex-

\*N. H. Vol. 2. p. 229.

†Ibid.

cept a union-jack at the mizen-mast head. This induced captain Bainbridge to order a gun to be fired ahead of her, to make her show her colours. It was succeeded by the whole of the Constitution's broadside. On this, the enemy immediately hoisted colours, and returned the fire. A general action now commenced with round and grape shot. The British frigate kept at a much greater distance than the commodore wished. He, however, could not bring her to closer action, without exposing his vessel to be several times raked. Both vessels for some time manœuvred to obtain a position that would enable them to rake, or avoid being raked. In the early part of the engagement the wheel of the Constitution was shot away. Commodore Bainbridge determined to close with the British vessel, notwithstanding, in so doing, he should expose his ship to be several times raked. He ordered the fore and mainsails to be set, and luffed up close to the enemy, in such manner that his jib-boom got foul of the Constitution's mizen-rigging. About 3 o'clock, the head of the British vessel's bowsprit and jib-boom, were shot away; and, in the space of an hour, her fore-mast was shot away by the board, her main-top-mast just above the cap, her gaff and spanker-boom, and her main-mast nearly by the board."

"About 4 o'clock, the fire of the British vessel being completely silenced, and her colours in the main rigging being down, she was supposed to have struck. The courses of the Constitution were now hauled on board, to shoot ahead, in order to repair her rigging, which was very much cut. The British vessel was left a complete wreck. Her flag was soon after discovered to be still flying. The Constitution, however, hove-to to repair some of her damages. About a quarter of an hour after, the main-mast of the British vessel went by the board. About three quarters of an hour after 4, the Constitution wore, and stood for the British vessel; and got close to her athwart her bows, in a very effectual position for raking, when she prudently struck her flag. Had she suffered the broadside to have raked her, her additional loss would have been extremely great; for she lay quite an unmanageable wreck upon the water."

"After the British frigate struck, the Constitution wore and reefed topsails. One of the only two remaining boats out of eight, was then hoisted out, and lieutenant Parker, of the Constitution, was sent to take possession of the frigate. She proved to be his Britannic majesty's frigate Java, rating 38, but carrying 49 guns. She was manned by upwards of 400 men; and was commanded by captain Lambert, a very distinguished naval officer. He was mortally wounded. The action continued, from the time the firing commenced till the time it ceased, one hour and 55 minutes."

"The Constitution had nine men killed, and 25 wounded. The Java had 60 killed, and 101 certainly wounded—but by a letter written on board the Constitution, by one of the officers of the Java, and accidentally found, it is evident her loss must have been much greater. He states it to have been 60 killed, and 170 wounded."

Whenever the Americans, in detailing their naval actions, find it convenient to shorten the duration of them, the word "about" is prefixed to the different dates or periods. Lieutenant Chadls' official account, by particularizing every material event that occurred during the action, exposes the artifice more completely than any thing we could offer. Here follows an extract from his letter:

"At fifty minutes past one P. M. the enemy shortened sail, upon which

we bore down upon her : at ten minutes past two, when about half a mile distant, she opened her fire, giving us her larboard broadside, which was not returned till we were close on her weather bow. Both ships now manœuvred to obtain advantageous positions, our opponent evidently avoiding close action, and firing high to disable our masts; in which he succeeded too well, having shot away the head of our bowsprit with the jib-boom, and our running rigging so much cut as to prevent our preserving the weather-gage.

“ At five minutes past three, finding the enemy’s raking fire extremely heavy, Captain Lambert ordered the ship to be laid on board, in which we should have succeeded, had not our fore-mast been shot away at this moment, the remains of our bow-sprit passing over his taffrail ; shortly after this the main-top-mast went, leaving the ship totally unmanageable, with most of our starboard guns rendered useless from the wreck lying over them.”

“ At half past three our gallant Captain received a dangerous wound in the breast, and was carried below ; from this time we could not fire more than two or three guns until a quarter past four, when our mizen-mast was shot away ; the ship then fell off a little, and brought many of our starboard guns to bear : the enemy’s rigging was so much cut, that he could not now avoid shooting ahead, which brought us fairly broadside and broadside. Our main-yard now went in the slings, both ships continued engaged in this manner till thirty five minutes past four, we frequently on fire in consequence of the wreck lying on the side engaged. Our opponent now made sail ahead, out of gun-shot, where he remained an hour repairing his damages, leaving us an unmanageable wreck, with only the main-mast left, and that tottering. Every exertion was made by us during this interval to place the ship in a state to renew the action. We succeeded in clearing the wreck of our masts from our guns, a sail was set on the stumps of the foremast and bowsprit, the weather half of the main-yard remaining aloft, the main-tack was got forward in the hope of getting the ship before the wind, our helm being still perfect ; the effort unfortunately proved ineffectual, from the main-mast falling over the side, from the heavy rolling of the ship, which nearly covered the whole of our starboard guns. We still waited the attack of the enemy, he now standing towards us for that purpose ; on his coming nearly within hail of us, and from his manœuvre perceiving he intended a position a-head, where he could rake us without a possibility of our returning a shot, I then consulted the officers, who agreed with myself that our having a great part of our crew killed and wounded, our bowsprit and three masts gone, several guns useless, we should not be justified in wasting the lives of more of those remaining, who I hope their Lordships and the country will think have bravely defended his Majesty’s ship : under these circumstances, however reluctantly, at fifty minutes past five, our colours were lowered from the stump of the mizen-mast, and we were taken possession of a little after six,

by the American frigate *Constitution*, commanded by Commodore Bainbridge, who, immediately after ascertaining the state of the ship, resolved on burning her, which we had the satisfaction of seeing done, as soon as the wounded men were removed."

Not, then, till after three hours and fifty minutes of determined resistance, nor till her bow-sprit and three masts were shot out of her, did the British frigate surrender. The *Java* lost all her boats; and so shattered was her hull, that as soon as the wounded could be removed, she shared the fate of the *Guerriere*.

The *Java* lost of her proper crew, three masters' mates, two midshipmen, and seventeen seamen and marines, killed; her commander; master, boatswain, three midshipmen, one lieutenant of marines, and forty five seamen and marines, and one boy, severely, and her first lieutenant, one midshipman, thirty-one seamen and marines, and three boys, slightly wounded; and of passengers and supernumeraries, four officers and nine seamen wounded; total killed and wounded 124.

The *Constitution* had her fore and mizen-masts, main-top-mast, top-sail yards, and several other spars, wounded by shot; and the greatest part of the standing-rigging very much damaged. All her boats but one were destroyed. In her hull she also suffered; more, indeed, than the Americans were willing should be known; as became evident afterwards, upon her being stripped at Boston to undergo repair.

She lost in the action, ten men killed and her commander, fifth lieutenant, and forty six men wounded; four of whom, Lieutenant Aylwin among them, died of their wounds; total 58. The Americans, in the published account of their loss, notice, as on former occasions, the slightly wounded only.

The gallant Captain Lambert survived the loss of his ship but six days. He was interred at St. Salvador on the 5th of January, with military honors.

The *Java* mounted the usual establishment of guns; twenty eight long eighteens, one twelve, and sixteen thirty-two pounder carronades; total 47. The Americans, still neglecting to specify the nature of the guns, have in one account given her 48; in another 49.

Her complement of men and boys consisted of 300. The supernumerary naval officers were, one commander, two lieutenants, one marine-officer, four midshipmen, one clergyman, one assistant-surgeon. There were also three military officers on board, besides other passengers, some servants, and between sixty and seventy supernumerary seamen and marines for ships on the East India station. Lieutenant Chadds states her "ship's company and supernumeraries" at 377. Commodore Bainbridge declares he paroled, altogether, 301; and that there were, in addition, nine Portuguese and three passengers, which he did not consider prisoners of war. As impartiality is our object, we shall take the number paroled,

believing, at the same time, that Lieutenant Chadds was correct in stating the Java's "ship's-company and supernumeraries" to have been 377. By adding the killed to the number paroled, the amount will be 383.

It is very hard, thus to be compelled to estimate as part of our force, that which really clogged and weakened it. The extra quantity of water and provisions for so large a crew, and so long a voyage, would bring the ship's battery nearer to the water:—what then would be the increased effect of the baggage of an East-India governor and his staff, copper for a seventy-four-gun ship and two sloops of war, and innumerable other articles of stores, with which the Java was lumbered?

The cheering of the Java's wounded men, while below in the cock-pit, proves that she had some true-hearted Britons among her sailors. But, admitting all were of that description, untaught the principles of gunnery, how were they to prevail over an enemy, who, to great superiority of force, added the most skilful use of his weapons.

Lieutenant Chadds, in a second letter to Mr. Croker, says, "I am sorry to find the Americans did not behave with the same liberality towards the crew, that the officers experienced; on the contrary, they were pillaged of almost every thing, and kept in irons."

The civilities shewn to the officers by Commodore Bainbridge, had better been with-held, than that British seamen should have been so mal-treated. Whatever excuse may be offered for the robbery, the placing of the men in irons must have been ordered by the commodore himself.

The armament of the *Constitution*, with the addition of an eighteen pounder carronade fitted upon an elevating carriage, was similar to what she mounted in her action with the *Guerriere*.

At this time she had her full complement of men on board; which Lieut. Chadds states at 480. "A great proportion of these," says one of the Java's lieutenants, "were known to be English; and many of them our prime sailors; some had belonged to the *Iphigenia*, others to the *Guerriere*; and, I am sorry to say, three of the Java's entered when prisoners."\*

The Java was a French-built ship; formerly *La Renommée*. The frigate captured with her, was *La Néécide*, now the *Madagascar*. The Java's dimensions will be found in the table.

The writer of the letter from which the above extract is taken, makes the following comparison between the masts of the Java and *Constitution*:—"It must strike every impartial observer, in noticing how rapidly the Java's masts were carried away, one after the other; but it remains no longer a mystery, when it is known the *Constitution*'s masts are equal to our seventy-four's; and it was noticed by the officers of the Java, after the action, that the Java's shot had passed through two of them; but so little did the Americans regard it, that when at St. Salvador, after the action, they did not attempt to fish the masts for security before going to sea."†

Having just been favoured with the perusal of the 29th volume of the *Naval Chronicle*,‡ containing the proceedings of the Court-Martial upon the surviving officers and crew of the Java, we are induced, notwithstanding

\*Br. Nav. Chron. Vol. 29. p. 453.

†Ibid.

‡The Packet, having on board the Halifax numbers, was captured by an American privateer.

the extract already given from the letter en service, to insert the following interesting address of Lieutenant Chadds to the president of the court :

“ My public letter is before this honourable court ; but being written immediately after the action, and on board the enemy, it does not, or indeed could the compass of a letter, contain the whole detail of so long an action ; and which detail therefore, I now submit to this honourable court.”

“ At 8 A. M. close in with the land, with wind at N. E. discovered a sail to the S. S. W. and another off the entrance of St. Salvador, cast off the prize in tow, and made all sail in chase of the vessel to leeward. At 10 made the private signal, which was not answered. At 11 hauled up, bringing the wind on our larboard quarter, took in all studding-sails, prepared for action, the stranger standing towards us under easy sail, and apparently a large frigate. At a little after noon, when about four miles distant, she made a signal, which was kept flying about 10 minutes, when she tacked and made sail from us under all plain sail, running just good full ; hauled up the same as the chase, but the breeze freshening, could not carry our royals ; we were going at least 10 knots, and gaining very fast on the chase. At 1. 30. she hoisted American colours. At 1. 50. having closed with the enemy to about two miles, he shortened sail to his top-gallant-sails, jib, and spanker, and luff'd up to the wind ; hoisted our colours, and put ourselves under the same sail, and bore down on him, he being at this time about three points on our lee bow. At 2. 10. when half a mile distant, he opened his fire from the larboard side, and gave us about two broadsides before we returned it, which was not done till within pistol shot, on his weather bow ; with our starboard guns. On the smoke clearing away, found him under all sail before the wind ; made sail after him. At 2. 25. engaged him with our larboard guns, received his starboard ; at 2. 35. wore, and raked him close under his stern, giving him the weather-gage, which he did not take advantage of, but made sail free on the larboard tack ; luff'd up and gave him our starboard guns, raking, but rather distant ; made sail after him. At 2. 40. enemy shortened sail ; did the same, and engaged him close to windward. At 2. 50. he wore in the smoke, and was not perceived till nearly round, having just lost the head of our bowsprit, jib-boom, &c. ; hove in stays, in the hopes of getting round quick and preventing our being raked, but the ship hung a long time, and we received a heavy raking broadside into our stern at about two cables' length distant ; gave him our larboard guns on falling off : the enemy were immediately ; did the same. At 2. 55. brought him to close action within pistol shot (at this time the master was wounded and carried below) till 3. 5., when finding the day violently gone, from all our rigging being cut to pieces, with our fore and main-masts badly wounded, Captain Lambert determined on boarding, as our only hope ; bore up, and should have succeeded in laying him abreast of his main chains, but from the unfortunate fall of our fore-mast, the remains of our bowsprit passing over his stern and catching his mizen-rigging, which was a great misfortune, as it brought us up to the wind, and prevented our raking him ; whilst under the enemy's stern, attempting to board, there was not a scul to be seen on his decks, from which circumstance I am induced to believe there was a good prospect of success ; this manœuvre failing, we were left at the mercy of the enemy, which he availed himself of, wearing across our bow, raking us, when our main-top-mast went, and wear-



ing again at 3. 2. under our stern. At 3. 30. our gallant captain was mortally wounded, and carried below; from this time till our mizen-mast went at 4. 15. he laid on our starboard quarter, pouring in a tremendous galling fire, whilst on our side we could never get more than two or three guns to bear, and frequently none at all. After this we fell off, and the enemy shot ahead, which again gave us the chance of renewing the action, which was done with good spirits, broadside and broadside, Java very frequently on fire from firing through the wreck, which lay on the side engaged, till 4. 35. when the Constitution made sail, and got out of gun-shot, leaving us a perfect wreck, with our main-mast only standing, and main-yard gone in the slings; cleared the wreck, and endeavoured to get before the wind by setting a sail from the stump of the foremast and bowsprit; got the main-tack forward, the weather yd-arm remaining aloft; cleared away the booms and got a top-gallant-mast out, and commenced rigging it for a jury fore-mast, and a lower-steering-sail as a fore-sail, but before we could get this accomplished, we were obliged to cut away the main-mast to prevent its falling inboard, from the heavy rolling of the ship. The enemy bore up to renew the action; made every preparation to receive him, reloaded the guns with round and grape; mustered at quarters and found 110 men missing, six quarter-deck guns, four fore-castle disabled, and many of the main-deckers, with the wreck lying over them, the hull knocked to pieces, and the foremast, in falling, had passed through the fore-castle and main-decks, all our masts and bowsprit gone, the ship making water, with one pump shot away, consulted now with lieutenants Nerringham and Buchanan, when it was determined to engage him again, should he give us an opportunity of so doing with a probability of disabling him, which was now our sole object, but that it would be wasting lives resisting longer, should he resume a raking position, which unfortunately was the case, and when close to us, and getting his broadside to bear. I struck, and hailed him, to say we had done so, at 5. 50. At six, she took possession of us, and proved to be the American frigate Constitution; the next day I found our loss was 22 killed, and 102 wounded, two of whom are since dead. The Americans allowed they had 10 killed, but differed very much about their wounded, which I found to be 44 severely, and four mortally; the slight wounds I could not ascertain."

H. D. Chadds, senior lieutenant."

B. Robinson, master."

"Having in the detail stated the number of killed and wounded on both sides, and as my account differs from the one in the public papers, and said to be the official reports of Commodore Bainbridge, I beg leave to state to the court, the manner in which I obtained this knowledge. Being of course anxious to discover the loss sustained by the enemy, I directed Mr. Capponi, assistant surgeon, to lend his assistance in dressing their wounded; this he did, and re-

ported to me the statement I have made. It having also been stated in the papers, that the Constitution was in a short time in a condition to commence a second action, I must beg to observe, that I do not think such a statement could have been authorised by Commodore Bainbridge, for her rigging was much cut, and her masts severely wounded, so much so, as to oblige her to return to America, which she certainly otherwise would not have done, for she was waiting only to be joined by the Essex, on the coast of Brazil, when the further destination of this squadron, I was given to understand, was India."

"I will trouble the court with but one more remark. When the prisoners were removed from the Java, she was set fire to, although but 12 leagues distant from St. Salvador, with moderate weather, the cause of which was, her shattered state, and not from any fear of taking her to a neutral port, as stated in Commodore Bainbridge's letter, for he repaired to the same port with his own ship, carrying in a valuable prize, the Eleanor schooner from London."

H. D. C.

Mr. Thomas Cooke Jones, late surgeon of the Java, confirms the preceding statement respecting the Constitution's loss in the action, thus :

"The Americans seemed very desirous not to allow any of our officers to witness the nature of their wounded, or compute their number. I ordered one of my assistants, Mr Capponi, to attend, when their assistant went round, and he enumerated 46 who were unable to stir from their cots, independent of the men who had received what they called "*slight burts*." Commodore Bainbridge was severely wounded in the right thigh, and four of their amputations perished under my own inspection."

How the features of an action may be changed by misrepresentation ! A little added to one side, and a little subtracted from the other, will do the whole. None know better than the Americans, the value of these two arithmetical properties ; and upon the prostituted use of them, have they founded all their claims to "superior skill and courage on the ocean."

This concludes our unsuccessful frigate-actions with the Americans. We shall defer entering upon a full discussion of the relative force of the American forty-fours, and different classes of British ships, until we arrive at the note detailing the capture of the President. Our statements respecting those extraordinary frigates, will then be grounded upon ocular demonstration ; and, if to shame the Americans be a hopeless task, we may yet convince the world, that our three frigates were captured by American ships, in every thing but mere number of guns, superior to British sixty-fours.

(F)

## PEACOCK and HORNET.

This action was fought off Demarara. No British official account has been published. The following particulars are extracted from the letter of the American commander to his government :

"At 5, 25," says Captain Lawrence, "in passing each other exchanged broadsides within half pistol-shot. Observing the enemy in the act of wearing, I bore up, and received his starboard broadside, ran him close on board on the starboard quarter, and kept up such a heavy and well directed fire, that in less than fifteen minutes she surrendered, (being totally cut to pieces,) and hoisted an ensign, union down, from his fore-rigging, as a signal of distress. Shortly afterwards her main-mast went by the board."

The Peacock sunk a few minutes after the action ended, carrying down thirteen of her own crew, and three of the Hornet's. Four of the thirteen afterwards gained the fore-top, and were saved by the Hornet's boats. Four others took to the stern-boat, and reached Demarara in safety.

Captain Peake, the gallant commander of the brig,\* was killed early in the action. She lost, also, four seamen killed; her master, one midshipman, carpenter and captain's clerk, and twenty nine men, wounded; of whom four died after being removed: total killed and wounded 38.

The rigging and sails of the Hornet were very much cut. One shot went through the fore-mast; and the bowsprit was slightly injured; but her hull received little or no damage. The Americans acknowledged a loss of only two men killed, and three wounded.

The Peacock was originally armed like the *Frolic*, and other first-class brigs; but Captain Peake, considering that her scantling was too slight to bear thirty-two-pounder carronades, got them exchanged for twenty-fours. Her thirty-twos are now on board the *Jasseur*. With two long nines, and a twelve-pounder carronade, the Peacock mounted nineteen guns; but the Americans have added to her armament "one four or six pounder, and two swivels."

Captain Lawrence says, "I find by her quarter-bill that her crew consisted of 134 men, four of whom were absent in a prize." Her officers positively declared, that she had only 110 in the action; including a large proportion of boys. Her complement was 121. It is not common, in the West Indies particularly, for British ships of war to exceed their establishment; nor were there at the date of the Peacock's action, many brigs, even on a home-station, that could muster more than 114 men and boys. We cannot say what number of the Peacock's crew were "on the sick-list;" but, owing to the length of time she had been on a West-India station, it is probable, none were in perfect health. How easily might Captain Lawrence, by stating the number of prisoners he received, have fixed the Peacock's complement, beyond dispute. His reasons for preferring the "quarter-bill," however, could not be mistaken.

The Hornet's armament was exactly double that specified in the table. Some of her officers said, after the action, that twenty-fours were as good as thirty-twos; and that, therefore, the two vessels were equally matched.

The Hornet had an officer and seven sailors absent in a prize: but her complement of men is not mentioned. We are told she mustered, on the morning after the action, "two hundred and seventy souls, including the crew of the American brig *Hunter*, of Portland, taken a few days before by the Peacock." Allowing this unarmed brig to have had twelve men, and deducting from the Peacock's crew of one hundred and ten, five men killed and four escaped, will leave 137 for the crew of the Hornet; which is

\*First Lieutenant of the *Victorious* when she took the *Rivoli*.

just the number she was stated to have had in the action.

"The Peacock," says Captain Lawrence, "was deservedly styled one of the finest vessels of her class in the British navy. I should judge her to be about the tonnage of the Hornet. Her beam was greater by five inches, but her extreme length not so great by four feet."

Fortunately, the dimensions of our ships of war can be obtained from the Admiralty-books; with facility and correctness; thereby enabling us to refute, in the most positive terms, the misrepresentations of the Americans. None of our eighteen-gun brigs are intended to exceed 381 tons. The variation of one inch in the extreme breadth, and of twelve inches in the rake of the stern-post, will cause all the difference to be discovered between them.

The dimensions of the Hornet will be found in the table. She is a much finer vessel than the Wasp; and sails remarkably well.

During the action between the Peacock and Hornet, *L'Espiegle* brig, of similar force to the Frolic, was lying becalmed under the land of Demarara; and, the Americans say, witnessed the engagement.

A court-martial has since been holden at Portsmouth, on Captain John Taylor of *L'Espiegle*, at the instance of the Admiralty. Among the charges preferred, was one for "failing in his duty, when in pursuit of the Hornet American sloop, after the capture of the Peacock"; and another, for "neglecting to exercise the ship's company at the great guns." Of the first, Captain Taylor was acquitted: of the latter, and some others, he was found guilty, and dismissed the service, recommended, however, owing to his former services, "to the favorable consideration of the Admiralty."

"Neglect to exercise the ship's-company at the great guns" was not confined to *L'Espiegle*. The Peacock had attended so little to that, and so much to having every thing on the deck smart and bright; that the rotten state of the breechings, under the fine white lining near the rings, was first discovered by the guns breaking loose, and wounding the men at their stations! When we contrast with this, the high order for fighting in which the Hornet was, and the admirable gunnery displayed by her crew, (the effect of proper discipline,) we feel consoled in reflecting, that the Peacock did not encounter a ship, her acknowledged equal in force.

Captain Lawrence took advantage of another fortunate event, that occurred to the Hornet upon this cruise. We allude to that ship's challenge to the *Bonne Citoyenne*, and its non-acceptance. Commodore Boinbridge, in his public letter, says, "The *Bonne Citoyenne* is a larger vessel, and of greater force in guns and men, than the Hornet; and I consider the refusal of Captain Greene to meet the Hornet, as a victory gained by the latter vessel."

The fact was this. The *Bonne Citoyenne* was lying in St. Salvador, with half a million sterling, in specie, on board; which she had brought from Rio-de-la Plata; and with which she would proceed to England, the moment her commander was assur-

ed, that the *Constitution* and *Hornet* were away from the coast.

The three ships were lying in harbour together ; and the nature of the *Bonne Citoyenne's* cargo, was perfectly understood by the American merchants (of which the consul was one) at St. Salvador. The officers also must have known, that it was impossible for Capt. Greene to land the specie, and neglect the service upon which he was expressly ordered, to gratify Commodore Bainbridge with the sight of an engagement between the two sloops. The American commanders, however, guessed, shrewdly enough, what fame they should acquire, at home, by making the experiment.

Mr. Hill, the American consul, had always been notoriously hostile to the British ; and that he should be ungenerous enough to reduce a British officer to the necessity of refusing, under any circumstances, to meet a ship of his own class, created no surprise whatever. But who could expect that two national officers, aware of the delicate situation in which a brother-officer, though a political enemy, was placed, would have urged the unhandsome request ; much less, have triumphed over the answer, which they knew it was his duty to return.

Captain Lawrence's boast of the *Hornet* having blockaded the *Bonne Citoyenne*, and a packet, until the *Montague* 71 chased her off, sounded very well, no doubt, in the ears of his countrymen ; but what assurance had Captain Greene that the *Constitution* was not cruising in the offing. The *Bonne Citoyenne* would have been a rich prize, indeed ; and her commander most justly laughed at, had he become the dupe of so shallow an artifice.

The two vessels were equally matched. The British ship mounted the same number of carronades as the American, and two long sixes instead of twelves. She had about twenty five men less than the *Hornet* ; but her crew had been exercised at the guns ; were well disposed ; and commanded by a gallant officer.

Without making the unpleasant avowal, that his government had upon this occasion reduced the vessel he commanded, from a King's cruizer to a merchant-ship, Captain Greene transmits, through the hands of Mr. Frederick Landeman, the British consul, a very proper reply to the challenge ; wherein he says, " I am equally convinced that Commodore Bainbridge could not swerve so much from the paramount duty he owes to his country, as to become an inactive spectator, and see a ship belonging to the very squadron under his orders fall into the hands of an enemy. This reason operates powerfully on my mind for not exposing the *Bonne Citoyenne* to a risk, upon terms so manifestly disadvantageous as those proposed by Commodore Bainbridge ; indeed, nothing could give me greater satisfaction than complying with the wishes of Captain Lawrence ; and I earnestly hope that chance will afford him an opportunity of meeting the *Bonne Citoyenne* under different circumstances, to enable him to distinguish himself in the manner he is now so desirous of doing."

## DOMINICA and DECATUR, priv.

Carried by boarding, after a desperate resistance of one hour. Though nearly double in numbers, the boarders were twice repulsed. When, at last, they did succeed in getting upon the *Dominica's* deck, her gallant little band struggled hard with them for several minutes. The following is extracted from the enemy's detail of the action :

"The *Dominica* not being able to disengage herself, dropped alongside ; and it was in this position that Captain *Diron* ordered his whole crew to board, armed with pistols, sabres, &c. which order was executed with the promptness of lightning. Fire-arms now became useless, and the crews were fighting, hand to hand, with cutlasses, and throwing cold shot ; when, the captain of the enemy and the principal officers being killed, the deck covered with dead and wounded, the English colours were hauled down by the conquerors."

"The surviving officers of the *Dominica*, attribute the loss of their vessel to the superior skill of the *Decatur's* crew in the use of musketry, and the masterly manœuvring of that vessel, by which the *Dominica's* carriage-guns were rendered nearly useless."

"Lieutenant Barrettté was a young man of not more than 25 years of age. He had been wounded early in the action by two musket-balls in the left arm ; but he fought till the last moment, refusing to surrender his vessel, although urged by the few survivors of his crew to do so, declaring his determination not to survive her loss. One of the *Decatur's* lieutenants received a severe sabre-wound in the hand from him, a few minutes before he fell."

"Captain *Diron* is a Frenchman, and most of the officers and crew of his vessel are his countrymen."

"The crew of the *Dominica*, with the exception of eight or ten boys, were fine-looking young men. Among the boys is a small one, not eleven years old, who was twice wounded, while contending for victory upon her deck."

Here was a promising sprout !—Will any one say this little fellow was not fitter for throwing *dumps*, than "cold shot" ? Yet the *Dominica* had eight or nine more, of nearly the same age ; and not a ship in the navy, but has too great a proportion of them.

The *Dominica* lost thirteen killed, and forty seven wounded ; total 60. Among the number, were nearly the whole of her officers. The *Decatur* lost four killed, and sixteen wounded, total 20.

It appears that the King's packet, *Princess Charlotte*, which had sailed from St. Thomas, under convoy of the *Dominica*, remained an inactive spectator of the bloody combat.

The British officers and crew are, in this action, allowed credit for their gallantry ; but Americans neither fought the battle, nor penned the account. It is only because the privateer's flag was American, that the action appears in these pages.

(II.)

## BOXER and ENTERPRISE.

This was a well-contested action of forty five minutes ; fought close inshore, upon the eastern coast of the United States. The British commander fell by the first broad-side : and the Boxer's main-top-mast was shot away soon afterwards.

The Enterprise, by her very superior sailing, and the loss of her adversary's mast, was enabled to obtain, in fifteen minutes after the firing commenced, a raking position on the Boxer's bow ; and which position she maintained throughout the action ; using her buck-shot and langridge with destructive effect.

Singular indeed it would be, were an American account of a battle, free from some bombastical expressions. From the " particulars " of this action, forwarded to a newspaper-editor by the American officers, we select the following :

" We manœuvred to-windward until 2 P. M. to try our sailing with the enemy, and ascertain his force. At 3 P. M. tacked and bore up for the enemy, taking him to be one of H. M.'s brigs of the largest size."

The American, then, manœuvred to ascertain, not if the Boxer was too strong for him, but whether or not she was sufficiently superior in size and force to be worth engaging ; and it was only on " taking her to be one of H. M.'s brigs of the largest size," that this valiant foe determined upon the assault.—Well said, Hector !

The Boxer was much cut up in hull and spars. She lost her gallant commander, Captain Samuel Blyth, and three men, killed ; four mortally wounded, and thirteen severely and slightly ; total 21.

The Enterprise suffered a good deal in spars and rigging ; and in her hull likewise, although not admitted. She lost one man killed ; her commander, who was a brave officer, a midshipman, and one seaman mortally, and ten others severely, wounded ; total 14. The three mortally wounded died a few hours after the action. Of those with " slight hurts " we have no account : they probably amounted to six or seven, at least.

The Boxer, when she first arrived on the North-American station, had ten eighteen-pounder carronades, and two sixes ; but she obtained two additional eighteens at Halifax. No vessel in the service below a first-class brig, carries a boat-carronade ; consequently, fourteen were all the guns the Boxer mounted.

Gun-brigs are allowed but one lieutenant, a master's mate, and two midshipmen. The Boxer's surgeon, the two midshipmen, and eight sailors were absent : which reduced her complement of men and boys to 66. On the death of her commander, the want of officers was most sensibly felt.

The prisoners received from the Boxer, including the four mortally wounded, amounted to sixty two ; which, added to the four killed, at once ascertained her complement. The first American account, however, was, that she left St John with " 115 picked men ; " of which 101 were in the

action; her killed, estimated at forty-two, having been all, except four, "hove overboard."

Commodore Hull condescended to go on board the prize, to count her hammocks; and finding ninety,\* writes Commodore Bainbridge, that he has "no doubt she had 100 men on board"; at the same time adds, "we find it impossible to get at the number killed."

Lieutenant McCall, who writes the official letter, is a little bolder on that point. He says,—“It appears there were between twenty and twenty five killed, and fourteen wounded.” This fixed the Boxer's complement at 84; and so it would have remained, had not a provoking "gentleman of the first respectability from Portland" furnished the editor of the *Newbury-port Herald*, with a correct account of the Boxer's guns, men, tonnage, and loss in the action.

The *Enterprise* mounted two eighteen-pounder carronades more than the Boxer; and nines instead of sixes. It has been asserted that her carronades were *French*; which would encrease the calibre one eighth; but we cannot depend upon the information.

As to her complement of men in the action, it has been variously stated in the American papers, from 102 up to 125. The *Nautilus*, taken at the first of the war, had 106; *Vixen* of 14 guns, 130; *Viper* of 12 guns, 93; *Rattlesnake* and *Siren* of 16 guns each, 131 and 137. We have therefore no scruple in fixing the *Enterprise's* crew at 125; and these, as usual, were picked seamen, with scarce a boy among them. She had two lieutenants besides her commander; the same as our eighteen-gun brigs.

Between the two vessels, considered as ships of war, a far greater disparity existed, than between the numbers of their crews. Of all classes of his Majesty's ships, none surely are so truly worthless as the gun-brigs. In point of sailing, the dullest merchantmen are their equals; and as to means of defence, they are literally without bulwarks to shelter the men, even from musketry. The Boxer had one timber between each port; the intermediate space consisting of inch and a quarter board!

Commodore Hull, in his letter to Commodore Bainbridge, expressed himself mightily pleased with the "quarters" of the Boxer; and the way in which she was "fitted up." Who would believe the naval commander alluded solely to her state-rooms, and the accommodations for her officers? His praises would have applied just as well to a Rhode-Island packet. When a British officer speaks of a ship's quarters, he contemplates room for fighting her guns, and height and stoutness of bulwarks; but perhaps the commodore, as in his description of the *Guerrière*, preferred ambiguity to precision.

The *Enterprise*, although not a first-rate sailer among American ships, had been chased, in vain, by several of our frigates; and once,

\*In our service, the boat-wain is usually allowed two for each man.



when in company with the Rattlesnake, by the Morgiana, ship-sloop, of sixteen twenty-four-pounder carronades, and two long twelves.

The bulwarks of the *Enterprise* are equal in thickness, and far superior in compactness, to those of our first-class brigs. She had been a schooner; but, soon after the declaration of war, was cut in two, lengthened, and converted to a brig. Not having the dimensions of the *Enterprise's* masts and yards, those of the *Nautilus* (now the *Emulous*) may serve for comparison with the *Boxer's*. They will be found in the table of dimensions.

The court-martial that sat upon the surviving officers and crew of the *Boxer*, were of opinion, that her capture was attributable "to a superiority of the enemy's force, principally in the number of men; as well as to a greater degree of skill in the direction of her fire, and the destructive effects of her first broadside."

We regret to observe, that the sentence pointedly charges a quarter-master, doing duty as master's mate, and three seamen, with "deserting their quarters during the action."

The editor of the "*Naval History of the U. S.*" declares, "the *Boxer* was in every respect superior to the *Enterprise*;"\* and when he treats upon the "loss of the British in vessels," and the "comparative loss in killed and wounded," places opposite to the *Boxer's* name, "guns mounted 18"—"British loss 39." In a subsequent page, Mr Clark introduces a "list of British vessels captured, extracted from Nile's Weekly Register." There our risibility is excited, by reading, "His Majesty's fine brig of war *Boxer*, of 18 guns."†—Where shall we find so good a satire upon the *Boxer*, and her late sister *Graces*?

The American government, appear to have more justly appreciated the character of the prize; being contented with retaining her name only, among the national vessels. When the *Boxer* was put up at auction, her clumpish appearance caused several to exclaim,—"What a grand cargo she'll stow;—she would make a grand company-keeping vessel, in a fleet of volunteers."—Here are qualities for one of his majesty's sloops of war!

(I)

## LAKE-ERIE ACTION.

The command of the British squadron on Lake-Erie had been refused by Captain Mulcaster, on account of the exceedingly bad equipment of the vessels. Captain Barclay was then appointed; and, with a lieutenant, surgeon, and nineteen rejected seamen of the Ontario squadron, he joined his command in June 1813.

Subsequently, fifty three seamen of the Dover troop-ship, were sent to him ; but then he had not more than one hundred and fifty British seamen distributed among his six vessels ; the rest of the men being Canadians and soldiers.

The Detroit, the British flag-ship, had been lately launched ; and to arm her, it became necessary to strip a neighbouring fort of its guns. Remoteness of situation, and difficulties of carriage, almost insuperable, now that the Americans had got the ascendancy on the lake, may afford some pretext for the half-equipped, deplorably-manned state of the British squadron. But had not thirteen months elapsed, since ministers were in possession of the American declaration of war ?

The fleet of the Americans, as they themselves informed us, was equipped in the most complete manner. Drafts of picked seamen from the ships on the sea-board, were continually marching to Lake-Erie ; and riflemen, in abundance, were easily procured from the country on its borders.

In short, the American ships possessed all the advantages of a home-station ; while ours were many thousand miles from home ; shut up in waters nearly surrounded by hostile shores ; from which there was no retreat ; and to which no succour could arrive.

On the ninth of September, Captain Barclay was lying in Amherstburg with his little squadron, anxiously waiting the arrival of a promised supply of seamen. So perfectly destitute of provisions was the post, that there was not a day's flour in store ; and the crews were then on half-allowance of many things. Impelled by dread of famine, the fleet sailed out, to risk a battle with the American squadron, then cruising off the port.

At day-light the next morning the enemy was discovered to leeward. Captain Barclay bore up for him ; but unfortunately, the wind suddenly shifted, and brought the American ships directly to-windard.

At twelve o'clock, the Detroit commenced firing. At a quarter past twelve, the Lawrence, bearing Commodore Perry's flag, supported by the Ariel and Scorpion, came to close action with her. The Niagara, supported also by two schooners, engaged the Queen Charlotte ; keeping so far to-windward, as to render the latter's twenty-four-pounder carronades entirely useless.

The action between the Detroit, and the Lawrence, Ariel and Scorpion, continued with great fury for two hours and a quarter, when the Lawrence dropped astern ; and soon afterwards struck.

Previous to the surrender of the Lawrence, Commodore Perry left her, and proceeded on board the Niagara ; then perfectly fresh, from having remained so far to windward. The Detroit was now a perfect wreck, principally from the fire of the long thirty-twos and twenty-fours on board the schooners ; and, in attempting to wear, she fell on board the Queen Charlotte. The Lady Prevost, armed

with twelve-pounder carronades, was far to-leeward, with her rudder injured. The other three vessels, owing to their size and armament, are scarcely worth noticing.

"The weather-gage," says Captain Barclay, "gave the enemy a prodigious advantage, as it enabled them not only to choose their position, but their distance also ; which they did in such a manner as to prevent the carronades of the Queen Charlotte and Lady Prevost from having much effect ; while their long guns did great execution, particularly against the Queen Charlotte."

The Detroit and Hunter had no less than four different calibres among their guns ; which were all on one deck. These guns were to be supplied with proper shot, and levelled at the enemy, by Canadians and soldiers, "totally unacquainted with such service ;" the few seamen dispersed among the fleet, having sufficient employment in trimming sails, and manœuvring the vessels. Never before, surely, did a British squadron go into battle, so miserably fitted out as Captain Barclay's !

The Detroit lost her first lieutenant, killed ; her gallant commander, and the purser, Mr. Hoffmeister, (who volunteered his services on deck,) dangerously wounded. The Queen Charlotte, her commander, killed ; her first lieutenant severely, and a midshipman, slightly wounded. The Lady Prevost, her commander and first lieutenant, severely wounded. The Hunter, her commander severely, and a midshipman, slightly wounded ; and the Chipewa, her commander slightly wounded. A lieutenant of the Royal Newfoundland regiment, also, was killed in the action. There were, exclusive of officers, thirty-eight men killed, and eighty five men wounded. Total, killed and wounded, 135.

All the principal officers and their seconds, were, it appears, either killed or wounded ; and many of them, early in the action. Here must have been increased confusion, among ships so wretchedly manned. Yet the few British seamen behaved with their usual intrepidity ; and the troops, with calmness and courage.

Captain Barclay had previously lost one arm in the service of his country. The other arm was now completely disabled ; a part of his thigh cut away by a cannon-shot ; and he had five other wounds in different parts of his body.

On board the enemy's brig, the Lawrence, a lieutenant of marines, and a midshipman, were killed : the first lieutenant and purser wounded ; total, killed and wounded, 83. The Niagara and other vessels lost, altogether, in killed and wounded, according to the American returns, 40 ; making a total of 123 ; only twelve less than ours, notwithstanding the immense disparity of force.

The Detroit mounted two twenty-fours, one eighteen, six twelves, and eight nines, long guns ; and one twenty-four, and one eighteen pounder carronade ; total 19. We have considered the long eighteen as a shifting gun ; and included it in the broad-side.

The Queen Charlotte mounted three long twelves, and fourteen twenty-four-pounder carronades. One long twelve we have considered as shifting. The Lady Prevost mounted three long nines, and ten twelve-pounder carronades; one long nine considered as shifting. The Hunter mounted two sixes, four *fours*, two *twos*, long guns; and two twelve-pounder carronades. The other two vessels mounted the same as specified in the table; their guns being all fought upon the broadside.

The Lawrence and Niagara mounted exactly double the armament specified in the table. The guns of the seven remaining American vessels, traversed upon pivot-carriages, so as to be fought on either broadside; and therefore, like the Little Belt and Chippewa's, appear wholly in the table.

The British fleet consisting partly of ships, and the American of only brigs and schooners, may give rise to an opinion, that the former were superior in size. So far from it, the Lawrence and Niagara, were each forty tons larger than the Detroit; the largest vessel in our fleet. Of what size American schooners, or even gun-boats, frequently are, will appear by a reference to the table of dimensions.

This being an action between more than two vessels, the united tonnage on each side is, however, of little consequence. Nor does the relative numerical force in men, afford a true estimate of force; as the bulk of the British crews consisted of persons "totally unacquainted with such service." In both long guns and carronades, the Americans had a decided advantage in the superiority of individual calibre; supposing even the gross weight of metal on each side, to have been the same. But, instead of that, an excess actually appears on the American side, of two to one.

Commodore Perry begins his first official letter in the style of Nelson: "It has pleased the Almighty to give to the arms of the United States, a signal victory over their enemies on this lake." His second letter, which is very artfully drawn up, details the action. He says, "Finding their fire very destructive owing to their long guns, and its being mostly directed at the Lawrence, I made sail, and directed the other vessels to follow, for the purpose of closing with the enemy."

Would any one from the foregoing statement infer, that, beyond three twelves, a few nines, sixes, *fours*, and *twos*, no "long guns" were on board any British vessel but the Detroit; that she carried only three long guns (two eighteens and one twenty-four) which were heavier than a twelve-pounder; and that Commodore Perry's own squadron fought in broadside, three long thirty-twos, and five long twenty-fours? Are we not compelled to say, that this "modest" American commander, has here been guilty of a gross misrepresentation?

The commodore admits the Lawrence struck her flag after he left her; and adds, "But the enemy was not able to take possession of her, and circumstances soon permitted her flag again to be hoisted."

In transmitting "a statement of the relative force of the contending fleets," the commodore is quite satisfied with enumerating the guns on each side. It was palpably evident, that 63 was a higher number than 54; and the American commander had no doubt fully ascertained, by his skill in figures, that he should obtain a much less favourable result, were he to particularize the calibre. Suppose a British vessel, armed with ten guns, *two*-pounders, had been captured by an American vessel, armed, like the Scorpion,

with two guns on pivots ; and those a long thirty-two and twenty-four-pounder. According to Commodore Perry's mode of estimating force, the former would be superior to the latter as 5 to 1 ; when, in reality, the superiority of force would be on the opposite side, in the same proportion.

A book has just been put into our hands, published at New-York, by "John Low," entitled, "an impartial and correct history of the war, &c.—carefully compiled from official documents." We are no longer unable to comprehend the meaning of a passage in the "criticism," ushering into notice the "Naval History of the U. S." which passage runs thus : "It (the N. H.) deals not in set, wholesale panegyric, overloads its various subjects with no fulsome flattery, nor stoops to worm its way into the favour of the country by adulation of its heroes,—adulation which the fame of such gallant men stands not in need of, and from which their good sense and spirit would recoil with disgust."

We do pronounce Mr. Clark's work, a far more modest performance than Mr. Low's ; nor can we give a prettier specimen of the latter, than in citing the author's remarks upon the Lake-Erie victory :—"Hitherto we have seen the enemy beaten, ship to ship, but now we were to witness them fleet to fleet ; and a more decisive or splendid victory was never achieved. Compared with this, all former naval victories lose their splendour ; even the great Nelson, were he alive, must rank below Perry.—Nelson never captured an *entire* fleet ; Perry has, and that with a fleet inferior in size, weight of metal, and number of men."\*

We have often been told, that the natives of New-England were a grave ; sober, and pious people ; and rather friendly, than otherwise, to the British nation.

Were a southern *democrat* to persist in a flagrant falsehood against the British, the best excuse that could be offered for him, would be, a constitutional warmth, an ardent zeal in whatever he undertook, the effects of the climate under which he lived. Were a cool, dispassionate Boston-*federalist* to commit a similar offence, what would be his excuse ?

Individual declamation we should scorn to notice, but have not the "citizens of Boston," by a vote *unanimously* given, caused to be engraved on tablets of silver, that "A VERY SUPERIOR BRITISH FORCE ON LAKE-ERIE, WAS ENTIRELY SUBDUED BY COMMODORE O. H. PERRY." ? To their disgrace, as moral characters, the Boston citizens have done so ; even when the force of the British squadron, in men and guns, and every other particular attending the action, were fully in their possession.

(K)

## EPERVIER and PEACOCK.

The Epervier was driven on shore in Halifax-harbour, in the gale of the 12th of November, 1813 ; and, owing to so many ships of war of higher

\*Low's Hist. of the war. p. 116.

rates than herself having also suffered upon that occasion, remained some months unrepaired. In the mean time, most of her men were drafted into other ships; and she had afterwards to take for a crew, foreigners, convalescents from the hospital, and refuse of every kind. With a complement, so made up, amounting to eighty-six officers, seamen and marines, and sixteen boys, the *Epervier* left Halifax, early in March, for Jamaica.

No British official account of this action having been published, we are again compelled to rely for information, chiefly upon the statement of the Americans.

In her way back to Halifax, with 120,000 dollars, in specie, on board, in lat. 27° 47' N. long. 80° 9' W., the *Epervier* encountered the U. S. ship *Peacock*. An action ensued, which lasted, according to Captain Warrington's letter, forty-two minutes; when the *Epervier*, having five feet water in the hold, her main-top-mast over the side, main-boom shot away, fore-mast cut nearly in two, and tottering, fore-rigging and stays cut away, bowsprit badly wounded, and forty five shot-holes in her hull, twenty of which were within a foot of her water-line, surrendered.

Many of the *Epervier*'s crew, in proof of their worthless character, behaved, during the action, in a cowardly manner; and, as if that was not enough to ensure defeat, with a ship even of equal force, the bolts connecting the carronade-slides to the side of the vessel, drew, it is said, as soon as the guns were fired! Could this fatal accident have happened, had a few shot, by way of exercise, been previously fired? Another misfortune attended the *Epervier*. A want of unanimity existed, where the utmost harmony should have prevailed,—between the commander and his officers.

The *Epervier* lost, according to the American account, eight men killed, and fifteen wounded, (partly, no doubt, by the breaking loose of the guns,) total, 23. Among the latter, was her first lieutenant, a brave and good officer, whose left arm was amputated.

Considering the state of the *Epervier*'s guns, alone, we cannot be surprised, much as we may regret, that her opponent escaped, by Captain Warrington's account, in the manner she did. "This," (the disabling of a fore-yard,) says he, "with a few top-mast and top-gallant back-stays cut away, and a few shot through our sails, is the only injury the *Peacock* has sustained. *Not a round shot touched our hull; our masts and spars are as sound as ever.*"—In addition, we find, two of the *Peacock*'s men were "slightly wounded".

The *Epervier* mounted originally the same as the *Frolic*; but Captain Wales got exchanged at Halifax, her two long sixes and boat-gun, for two eighteen-pounder carronades. The American prize-master called the whole "eighteen thirty-two pounder carronades;" and the newspaper-editors added two long guns.

Jamaica is not celebrated for augmenting the complements of ships; but we believe the *Epervier* had as many passengers on

board, as made her's amount to 109. Passengers, if not attached to the service, are invariably an incumbrance to a ship in action. To prevent cavilling, however, we shall continue to estimate them as part of the complement.

Double the guns specified in the table, composed the armament of the Peacock. As to her complement of men having been upwards of 182, we have that confirmed by persons subsequently captured by her. We believe the complement of this class of vessels is 171; but American commanders are allowed to take on board, supernumeraries; the number of which depends more, we understand, upon the captain's industry in procuring them, and the character of the ship for sailing, than upon any express order from the navy-board.

A patriotic writer from Savannah, into which port the prize was carried, furnished a newspaper-editor with "the dimensions of the two vessels." By measuring from the head to the taff-rail, he makes the Epervier's "length 107 feet." For her "breadth 32 feet," he must have extended his line beyond each main-chain. Her "depth 14 feet," we presume he guessed at. With these figures before him, he makes her, "tons 467-75-95ths." The gentleman was aware of the advantage of adding fractions to his estimate. The Peacock, he appears to have measured on deck; and, deducting the odd inches, states her to be in "length 118 feet."\* He contracts her breadth (according to the American plan of measurement) one foot exactly, calling it the same as the Epervier's, 32. Her depth he also makes the same; and states her to be "509 tons;" which, as her American measurement, is correct enough.

This flattering item of news, spread like wild-fire through all the papers, from Georgia to Maine. What was a difference of 42 tons?

Without answering for the *stretching* qualities which the Epervier might have acquired under her new masters, her dimensions, precisely as they were when she quitted our service, will be found in Table 7. Her American tonnage, instead of 467-75-95 tons, was only 344-50-95ths; as Captain Warrington's carpenter, could have informed the Savannah scribbler.

As by the capture of the President, we gained a knowledge of the American forty-four's, so the capture of the Frolic-corvette has acquainted us, thoroughly, with Mr. Madison's new eighteen-gun sloops.

The Frolic, Wasp, Peacock, Argus, (burnt at Washington,) Erie, and Ontario, were built, we understand, from the same model; and measure, within a ton or two of each other.

The Frolic-corvette, has eleven ports and a bridle on each side; with bulwarks as thick as a 32-gun frigate's, and much better filled up. Her beams are stouter than those of a 38-gun frigate. The

\*The Frolic's deck is 118 feet, 9 inches.

size of the Peacock's spars, and the immense advantage which marines in her tops must have over those stationed in a brig's tops, will appear, at once, by a reference to the Frolic's dimensions, as given in the table.

The Epervier's first cruize in the American service proved fatal to her. It is conjectured, she foundered at sea; becoming the grave, unfortunately, of about one hundred and fifty souls.

(L)

BALLAHOU and PERRY, priv.

This was an action of one hour. In some of the American papers it was stated, that the Ballahou had only two guns mounted; the others, owing to bad weather, having been placed in the hold. The loss on either side is not accurately known.

American privateers of 5 or 7 guns, one on a pivot, (generally a long eighteen or twenty-four-pounder,) are far superior vessels, to such as we arm with 12 or 14 guns.

The Harlequin schooner, of which the dimensions are given in the table, mounted ten long twelves, with sights to every gun; and had a complement of 115 men. Her bulwarks were a trifle stouter, and four inches higher, than those of our first-class brigs. What schooner have we ever had in the service, of half the Harlequin's force?—The Mammoth, and some others in America, are stated to be larger than she is.

(M)

REINDEER and WASP, (2).

This action was fought in lat. 48° 36' N. long. 11° 15' W. No British official account has been published. Mr. Low, the American war-historian, says, "the action commenced at twenty six minutes after 3 P. M. and at forty five minutes past 3, the enemy was carried by boarding."\* Another American account, states the action to have lasted "forty minutes;" and we know, that during fifteen minutes, the two vessels were engaged, yard-arm and yard-arm. "For the short time it lasted," says Mr. Low, "the action was severe; and both vessels and crews suffered considerably. The loss on board the Wasp was principally occasioned by repelling the enemy in two attempts which he made to board."\*

\*Low's Hist. of the war, p. 261.



An action close as this was, gave full scope to American rifles, langridges, swan and star-shot, iron bolts, and dismantling artillery of every sort. The Reindeer soon became a perfect wreck in hull and rigging; so much so, that the Americans were compelled to destroy her the next morning.

The brig lost her commander, purser, and twenty one petty officers, seamen and marines, killed; ten dangerously, seventeen severely, and fifteen slightly, wounded; total 75. Among the wounded, was every individual officer on board; and she was actually surrendered by the captain's clerk, no higher officer being in a state to perform the melancholy task.

Captain Manners received as many as seventeen wounds.—The calves of his legs were shot away early in the action; yet did he keep the deck, encouraging his crew, and animating by his example the few officers that were on board. A shot now passed through both his thighs. He fell on his knees; but quickly sprang up, and though bleeding profusely, resolutely refused to quit the deck. Perceiving the dreadful slaughter which the musketry in the enemy's tops was causing, he called out to his men, "Follow me, my boys, we must board them." While climbing into the rigging, two balls from the tops penetrated his skull, and came out beneath his chin. Placing one hand on his forehead, the other convulsively brandishing his sword, he exclaimed,—“O God!”—and dropped lifeless on his own deck.

“To live with fame

The gods allow to many; but to die

With equal lustre, is a blessing Heaven

Selects from all the choicest boons of fate,

And with a sparing hand on few bestows.”

Clover,

One of the Reindeer's men was wounded in the head by a ramrod; which required to be sawed off close to the skull, before it could be extracted. The man happily recovered. After receiving this desperate wound, he, also, refused to go below; saying to those who begged him to leave his gun, “If all the wounded of the Reindeer were as able to fight as I am, we should soon make the Americans strike.”

Is it not singular, that the official account of an action so truly heroic, so highly honourable to the British character, as that of the Reindeer and Wasp, should not have been deemed worthy a place in the Royal Gazette?

“Six round shot,” says the American account, “struck the hull of the Wasp; a twenty-four-pounder shot passed through the fore-mast; and a considerable number of grape, struck, but did not penetrate, her side.” Two of her carronades, also, were disabled.

The same account admits, that she lost five killed, and twenty one wounded; total 26. “Slight hurts,” as usual, not reckoned.

In short, the injury the Wasp sustained, sent her to L'Orient: where she arrived on the 8th of July. She remained in that port, repairing her damages, and replenishing her crew, until the 27th of August, a period of seven weeks; when she again sailed on a cruise.

Her commander, Captain Blakely, has been described to us as an honourable man, and a good officer. How much his character would have risen in our estimation, had he bestowed a few words upon the sufferings and behaviour of his gallant adversary.

The Reindeer originally carried thirty-two-pounder carronades; but,

having lost them in a gale, and being weak from age, (built of *fir*, in 1804,) they were replaced by the twenty-fours she had in the action.

Her complement consisted of 123 men and boys ; but her second lieutenant, a midshipman, and five seamen being absent, she had, on commencing the action, only ninety eight men, and twenty boys ; total 118.

The Americans, to enhance their victory, styled her crew "picked men."—Picked crews are not known in our navy ; but the Reindeer's men, by having served some years, and being under the command, not of a tyrannical officer, but of one, who was "the idol and delight of his ship's company," were what Britons, we trust, will ever be, an over-match for an equal number of any men on earth.

The armament of the *Wasp* was the same as the *Peacock's* ; with the addition of a twelve-pounder carronade, fitted upon an elevating carriage. Her crew consisted of 175, selected in the usual manner ; including 26 marines, who, stationed in the tops, committed with their rifles, dreadful havoc among the Reindeer's officers and men : at the two boarding-attempts particularly.

The *Wasp* being, as stated in note (K), a sister-ship to the *Peacock* and others, the particulars respecting the *Frolic*, ship-sloop, there given,\* will fully suffice. The tonnage of the Reindeer was the same as the *Pelican's* ; therefore her name in the table may be referred to.

'Tis only British seamen that will board, when the enemy is known to out-number them. Had the numerical difference between the two crews in this action, been a trifle less than it was, does any one doubt what would have been the fate of the *Wasp* ?

Although, concealed behind a ship's bulwarks, the traitor may evince the utmost ferocity, he dares not face his honourable countryman, hand to hand, and foot to foot. The sight appals him. He that was once a lion in battle, now, scourged by a guilty conscience, shrinks into the veriest coward.

Could we hope for a candid answer, we would ask Commodore Bainbridge or Hull, or any other experienced naval commander of the United States, whether, having to execute a dangerous and doubtful enterprise, against an enemy, not Britons, with the liberty of selecting his men, he would choose native or *adopted* Americans ?

The American prints, especially the federal ones, will, we know, refer us to *American* feats at Tripoli ; but did not a notorious Scotch renegade at New-York, and numerous other crimps, supply the American ships with lots of deserters from our navy ? Were not their complements afterwards made up, in a similar manner, at Cadiz, and different ports in the Mediterranean ? and was not Commodore Preble, on that very account, obliged to, "shorten his stay" at Gibraltar ; and to fix Syracuse, instead of Malta, for his rendezvous :†

\* See above p. 41.

† Am. Porte folio, Vol. 4. p. 531.

It cannot be controverted, that in repelling boarders, however small in number, the Americans depend more upon rifles, than manual strength ; and that as boarders themselves, they seldom act, until the enemy's deck has been, like the Frolic's and Reindeer's, prepared for their reception, by volleys of great guns and musketry.

Here we had opposed to us, without estimating the total number on either side, thirty-twos to twenty-fours, and eighteens to sixes. When we turn to the table, and view the decided superiority of the American ship, in broadside-weight of metal, men and size ; then reflect upon the execution done in spite of that superiority ; as well as upon the unparalleled devotion, intrepidity, and fortitude, displayed by the Reindeer's officers and crew, we may venture to pronounce this, one of the noblest naval defences, that any war has produced.

(N)

LANDRAIL and SYREN, priv.

This was a running fight of one hour and ten minutes, and a close action, within pistol-shot, of forty minutes ; in all, two hours.

The cutter had left port with dispatches ; which were thrown over-board. She lost in the action, seven men wounded, but none killed. The privateer lost three killed, and fifteen wounded, including some officers ; total 18.

Highly creditable was this very unequal contest, (in men four-fold,) to Lieutenant Lancaster, and his little boat's-crew ; and a convincing proof, that even two twelve-pounder carronades, if well pointed, can do execution.

The Landrail was afterwards recaptured ; and, although pierced for two guns of a side only, she appears in a published American "prize-list" as having mounted eight ; the Ballahou, in the same list, being provided with ten.

How many British *cruizers* like the Landrail, would it require, to equal in force one of the American gun-boats, captured at New-Orleans ?

(O)

AVON and WASP.

The Wasp, as we stated before, sailed from L'Orient, upon a cruise, on the 27th of August, thoroughly refitted and manned.

On the first of September, about half past eight in the evening, and a clear moon-light, in lat.  $47^{\circ} 33'$  lon.  $10^{\circ} 37'$ , she fell in with the Avon brig.

An action ensued; which continued, we say, two hours and twenty minutes, the Americans, only forty three minutes; when the Avon, being so extremely shattered in hull, as to be actually sinking, struck her flag.

At this moment, the Castilian brig hove in sight, and prevented the Wasp from taking possession. The Castilian passed within hail of the Avon; and, although no extraordinary sailer, soon overtook the Wasp, who was making the best sail she could, to get away. A signal of distress, accompanied by a gun, was now observed from the Avon. This induced Captain Bremer, after firing a broadside into the Wasp, which was not returned, to haul up for his sinking companion. He barely arrived in time to rescue the surviving crew from a watery grave; the Avon going down, just as the last boat reached the Castilian. Chace was again given, and continued through the night, in the supposed direction of the Wasp; but in vain.

The Wasp fought more warily in this action, than in the Reindeer's. She never came fairly alongside, so as to give the Avon an opportunity of boarding; but kept hanging on her quarter. Her long eighteens assisted her greatly; and by her star and chain shot, she effected the complete destruction of the brig's rigging, as well as of the main-mast; which fell over the side early in the action. Four of the Avon's cannonades, also, were disabled.

The Avon lost eight men killed; her first lieutenant, and one seaman mortally wounded, and thirty two seamen and marines severely and slightly, (principally the latter,) total 42.

The Americans say, three shot pierced the Wasp's bulwarks; and that she lost only two men killed, and one wounded. We must here again make the usual allowance, for such as are not in the returns.

The Avon's armament will appear by reference to the table. She had, it seems, no boat-cannonade. Her crew consisted of one hundred and four officers, seamen and marines, and thirteen boys; total 117.

The Wasp's armament has already been given. That she had a twelve-pounder-cannonade on board, appears by the following extract from her log: "At twenty six minutes after nine, fired the twelve-pounder-cannonade, to make him heave to."

The constant intercourse kept up with the port of L'Orient, while the Wasp was lying there, enabled us to ascertain, that Captain Blakely found so little difficulty in manning his ship, as to have refused several who were desirous to enlist. With the privilege of taking on board supernumeraries, it is therefore probable, that the Wasp left L'Orient with more men than she had in her first action.

Great bravery was displayed by the Avon's officers and ship's company, and a highly commendable skill in gunnery, we must admit, by the Wasp's. Nor did the Castilian's men give proofs, that they at all excelled the Avon's, in that, with us, much neglected branch of naval tactics.

The Americans say, in an equivocal manner, "At 56 minutes past ten, two brigs in sight, when the Wasp was compelled to relinquish her prize."\* It is positively asserted by the Avon's officers, that no other vessel than the Castilian appeared in sight, or was near the spot; and if the Wasp was again "prepared for action," how happened it that she did not return the Castilian's broadside?

One of the American officers saw so indistinctly through the moon-light, as to have declared, in a letter which has appeared in print, that the Avon was "longer and more lofty than the Wasp, and had eleven ports upon her side." For the size of either vessel, we are happily at no loss. The Avon's dimensions, and the Frolic's for the Wasp's, will be found in the table. Eleven painted ports, and sometimes an extra *wooden* gun, may be seen upon the sides of a few of our brigs; but none of this class, we repeat, can fight more than nine guns of a side, exclusive of the boat-cannonade.

The same officer assured his countrymen, that, "with her present commander and crew, the Wasp could beat a 28-gun frigate." This redomontade was merely a paroxysm of the national disorder; which, abroad as well at home, will have its returns. We think the writer should have reserved his boast, until the Wasp had conquered a force of acknowledged equality.

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(P)

## LAKE-CHAMPLAIN ACTION.

Our principal vessel on this lake, the *Confiance*, had been but sixteen days off the stocks; when the commander in chief, Sir George Prevost, called for the instant co-operation of the naval force, in a meditated attack upon the American fleet and works at Plattsburg.

No refusal *cou'd* be given. With the carpenters still working ather, and having on board an unorganized crew, composed of several drafts of men, recently arrived from different ships at Quebec; many of whom joined only the evening before, and were totally unknown either to the officers, or to each other; being also without gun-locks, or one half the necessary appointments of a ship of war, the *Confiance* sailed forth, accompanied by a brig, two sloops, and eleven gun-boats, to attack the American fleet, consisting of a ship, brig, schooner, sloop, six row-gallies, and four gun-boats, fully prepared, and moored in their own bay, within range of the batteries on shore.

The crews of the British vessels were assured by their gallant commander, that the general and his powerful army would make a simultaneous attack; and that victory would (as no one could doubt) crown their united efforts. For the honour of the soldiers, and the officers, in general, they wanted to rush forward; but—it was thought advisable to restrain them!!

The *mistake* was discovered too late. The British vessels were already in the enemy's harbour. Unfortunately, too, a light air prevailed, which enabled the American row-gallies and gun-boats to commence upon them in their advance, a heavy and galling fire.

The *Confiance*, the British flag-ship, having two anchors shot away from her larboard bow, was obliged to anchor, not so advantageously as had been intended. The *Lianet* and *Chubb* took their stations; and the action began. The latter vessel presently had her cables, bowsprit, and main

boom shot away ; and, drifting within the enemy's line, was obliged to surrender. The Finch had the misfortune to strike on a reef of rocks ; and her services in the action were entirely lost ; and the gun-boats, says Captain Pring, in his letter, " abandoned the object assigned them."

All the enemy's vessels but the Eagle, were now united against the Confiance ; who had lost her gallant commander, early in the action. The Saratoga's guns on the starboard side, being after two hour's engagement, nearly all dismounted, or not manageable, a stern-anchor was let go, the bower-cable cut, and the ship winded with a fresh broadside on the British ship. The Confiance, having her larboard broadside in a similar situation, also made an attempt to wear round ; but, owing to the damage she had sustained, did not succeed. Being now a perfect wreck, and having no guns to bear on the enemy, she, very properly, made the signal of submission.

The Linnet, all this while, remained closely engaged with the Eagle ; (a very superior adversary ; ) and at last compelled her to cut her cable, and run down for shelter between the ship and schooner. The ship and two sloops being now in the enemy's possession, the whole of the American force was directed against the Linnet ; which obliged the latter, in fifteen minutes after the surrender of the Confiance, to haul down her colours also.

The Confiance lost her very gallant commander, Captain Downie, a captain of marines, a midshipman, and thirty eight seamen and marines, killed ; one officer, and thirty nine seamen and marines, wounded. The Linnet lost two officers, and eight seamen, killed ; one officer, and thirteen seamen and marines, wounded. The Chubb, six seamen and marines, killed ; one officer, fifteen seamen and marines, wounded. The Finch two seamen and marines wounded. Total, British killed and wounded, 129. The fact of the gun-boats having experienced no loss, is a strong corroborative proof, that they were not engaged.

The Americans acknowledge a loss as follows : " ship Saratoga, Commodore Macdonough, twenty eight killed, and twenty nine wounded. Brig Eagle, thirteen killed, and twenty wounded. Schooner Ticonderoga, six killed, and six wounded. Sloop Preble, two killed. Gallies, three killed, and three wounded ; total 110." Allowing, upon a very moderate calculation, that the " slight hurts" amounted to nineteen more, the execution done by the British in this extremely unequal contest, proves with what gallantry and earnestness they fought.

The statement of the force of the British vessels, (owing to Capt. Pring, or perhaps Sir James Yeo, having accidentally omitted to enclose it in his letter,) we are compelled to take from the American accounts.

The Confiance mounted upon her main-deck, twenty seven, what they are pleased to call, " long guns ;" but which were in fact similar to those the Americans took in the Stranger transport ; and such

as we call "Congreve's;"—a gun very little better than a carronade. She had a poop and top-gallant-fore-castle, upon which were mounted two long eighteens, and four thirty-two-pounder carronades;—Six twenty-four-pounder carronades were lying on "the birth-deck;" but which the American commodore has had the modesty to include in her armament; making her mount, altogether, 39 guns, instead of 33. We have considered the odd main-deck gun as shifting; and estimated it in the broadside.

The guns of the Linnet and two sloops, will appear by the table; the odd eighteen-pounder and six in the latter, are included in the broadside.

The force of the gun-boats is not exactly known; nor of the American sloop Montgomery, which rendered as much assistance in the action as they did. When are also considered, the destructive use to which the American land-batteries might have been put, in case of emergency; and that "American militia ready to assist," were posted on the shore, it will surely be deemed as fair to the Americans as the British, to consider the vessels actually engaged, as comprising the whole force on each side.

The amount of the united crews of the British vessels engaged, we are enabled to give from undeniable authority. The Americans estimated the crews of our ship, brig, and two sloops, at 500; and our loss in killed and wounded on board those vessels, at 194. By subtracting from the first number, the difference between our real and supposed loss, there will remain 435. A subsequent American account says, "British prisoners received from Lake-Champlain, 306." In this amount, the wounded, who had all been paroled and sent to Isle aux Noix, would not of course be included. Therefore by adding the loss, 129, to 306, the sum will be also 435.

The armament of the American squadron will appear by the table. The odd guns are, as usual, brought into the broadside; as well as all the guns of the galleys and gun-boats, on account of their traversing upon pivots.

We wish the complements of the American vessels, could be given with the same accuracy. The Americans themselves have fixed them at 820; which, opposed to 1050, the estimated number of the British crews, (in the gun-boats and all,) made the Americans, what, by their own account, they usually are, inferior to us in force.

It is very common for American naval officers, when asked the complements of their ships, to give the number of officers and ships company only, leaving the marines to be added. In further proof that a distinction between the two services, however slight, does prevail, we find the American marine-officers in the Lake-Champlain action, writing their own official letters to government; a thing unprecedented, we believe, in our navy.

The estimate of the united crews of the American ship, brig, schooner, sloop, six row-galleys, and four gun-boats, as given in the table, is probably rather below the mark, when we consider

that the Americans were lying in their own harbour, expecting the attack; and had, by their own account, procured full complements for all their vessels, upwards of six weeks previous to the action.

The relative tonnage of the contending fleets, is in this, as in the Lake-Erie action, of far less consequence than the weight of metal and men. To give importance to their victory, however, the Americans frequently advert to "the commodore's big ship *Confiance*;" as well as to "the fearful odds opposed to them." We cannot give the dimensions of any of the vessels engaged; but, long before this action was even contemplated, the Americans informed us, that the *corvette* *Pike* on Lake Ontario was "nearly as large as the *Macedonian*;" that the brigs building on the different lakes, were similar in size to the *Hornet*; (which ship was formerly a brig;) that the "new schooner on Lake Champlain" was upwards of 400 tons; and that the new galleys were very superior vessels.

Upon the whole, we have fixed the size of the vessels on each side, according to the best information we could obtain; but, we again say, the weight of metal and men, are in this action the principal considerations.

After having seen a whole year's adulation bestowed upon one "illustrious hero," for making free with Nelson's language, we cannot be surprised that Commodore Macdonough should also write: "The Almighty has been pleased to grant us a signal victory on Lake-Champlain, in the capture of one frigate, one brig, and two sloops of war, of the enemy."

Here was a wide field for displaying the embellishing talents of the commodore's countrymen!—A "frigate";—but, above all, "two sloops of war": each fifteen tons smaller than an American gun-boat captured at New-Orleans. Commodore Macdonough, too, is designated as a "pious, modest man."—Ount upon such modesty!—But to comment, would be to usurp the privilege of the reader.

The American commander details the action in a second letter. Aware it would be urged against him, that the gun-boats were not in the action, he artfully says: "In this situation, the whole force on both sides became engaged."—He thus describes the damage done to the two ships: "The *Saratoga* had 55 round shot in her hull; the *Confiance* 105. The enemy's shot passed principally just over our heads, as there were not twenty whole hammocks in the nettings at the close of the action, which lasted, without intermission, two hours and twenty minutes." The commodore has omitted to inform us, how many of those 105 shot belonged to the *Ticonderoga*, *Preble*, six row-galleys, and four gun-boats, which were also engaging the British commodore's "big ship."

A reference to the comparative loss on each side, will shew, that some of the *Confiance*'s guns must have been levelled low enough; or that many of the *Saratoga*'s men were of extraordinary height. One quarter of the drilling which First-lieutenant Perry gave to the crew of the latter vessel, would perhaps have saved the *Confiance*'s newly-arrived ship's company from this intended reproach.

Leaving to Americans the full benefit to be derived, from invariably mistaking good fortune for gallantry, we shall close this article, with an extract from the sentence of the court-martial upon Captain Pring, his officers and men.

"The Court having maturely weighed the evidence, is of opinion that the capture of his Majesty's ship *Confiance*, and the squadron, by the



American squadron, was principally caused by the British squadron having been urged into battle previous to its being in a proper state to meet the enemy ; by the promised co-operation of the land forces not being carried into effect, and the pressing letters of the commander in chief, whereby it appears, that he had on the 10th of September, 1814, only waited for the naval attack, to storm the enemy's works ; that the signal of the approach on the following day was made by the scaling of the guns, as settled between Captain Downie and Major Coote, and the promised co-operation communicated to the other officers and crews of the British squadron."

The court noticed the defection of "part of the gun-boats," and the accidents which prevented others of the vessels from getting into the stations assigned them ; and honorably acquitted all the officers and men, except the commander of the Chubb, who did not appear to take his trial. At a subsequent day, Lieutenant McGhie was "severely reprimanded," (without his courage being called in question,) for not having properly carried the Chubb into action, nor anchored her so as to do the most effectual service ; by which she drifted into the enemy's line.

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(Q)

LEVANT }  
CYANE } and CONSTITUTION.

The two British ships, while proceeding in company, a few days out from Gibraltar, bound to the Western Islands, fell in with the Constitution. She was discovered first by the Cyane, upon her weather-bow ; the Levant then hull-down to-leeward.

As soon as the character of the stranger became known, the Cyane bore up for the commodore ; whom she joined and spoke, at about three quarters of an hour past four ; when it was determined to engage the American frigate. The two ships then tried for the weather-gage ; but finding they could not obtain it, bore up together, in hopes to prolong the commencement of the engagement until night.

Finding that object also defeated by the superior sailing of the Constitution, at ten minutes past five the Levant and Cyane hauled to the wind on the starboard tack. In ten minutes afterwards, the Constitution, being about three quarters of a mile to-windward, tried the range of her shot, and, having ascertained that the two ships were under the command of her main-battery, commenced action.

Both ships returned the fire, but observed their shot to fall short ; while the Constitution's long guns were cutting them to pieces, particularly the sails and rigging. As the British fire gradually slackened, the Constitution shortened her distance : and by her superior sailing and facility of manœuvring, frequently raked both ships.

At about forty minutes past six, the *Cyane* was without a brace or bow-line, except the larboard fore-brace. Yet, seeing her consort exposed to a heavy raking fire, owing to the *Constitution* having filled across her, she gallantly stood in between them; and received the tremendous broadside.

The firing continued at intervals, for a few minutes longer; when the *Cyane* turned the hands up to refit the rigging. That could not be accomplished, before the *Constitution* had taken a position on her larboard quarter, within hail. Being now totally unmanageable, with most of her standing and running rigging gone, lower-masts and other principal spars wounded, several shot in the hull, nine or ten of which were between wind and water, five caronades disabled, chiefly by the *drawing of the bolts, and starting of the chocks*, and the *Levant* being two miles to-leeward, still bearing away, the *Cyane* fired a lee-gun and hoisted a light, as a signal of submission; and soon after seven, was taken possession of by the *Constitution*.

The *Levant*, aware of the disabled state of the *Cyane*, had bore up to repair damages; still doubtful, as she proceeded, whether or not the cessation of firing was caused by her surrender. As soon as new braces were rove, the gallant little ship again hauled her wind, to ascertain the fate of her companion; as well as to renew the desperate combat. For her proceedings on this occasion, we will consult the log-book of the *Constitution*.

"At 8 P.M. filled away after her consort, (*Levant*), who was still in sight to leeward. At 8, 30, found her standing towards us with starboard tacks on board, top-gallant-sails set, and colours flying. At 8, 50, ranged up close alongside to-windward of her, on opposite tacks; and exchanged broadsides. Were immediately under her stern and gave her a raking broadside; when she made all sail, and endeavoured to escape by running: hauled on board our tacks, and set flying-jib and spanker in chase. At 9, 30, commenced firing our starboard bow-chasers; gave her several guns, which injured her spars and rigging considerably. At 10, P. M. finding she could not escape, she fired a lee-gun, and struck her colours."

The above two gallant broadsides shot away the wheel, killed three or four men wounded several, and cut up the *Levant* exceedingly, in spars, rigging and hull. Considering that this vessel was built of fir, and of very light scantling, it is surprising the *Constitution's* fire did not sink her.

Had the *Levant* continued her course on first bearing away, her commander declared he could easily have escaped; but personal consideration in battle, is not the characteristic of a Douglas.

The *Levant* lost six petty officers, seamen and marines, killed; and sixteen wounded: total 22. The *Cyane*, six killed, and thirteen wounded; total 19.

"*Old Ironsides*," as she is called in America, knew the range of a thirty-two-pounder caronade too well, to allow many shots to

reach her. Her rigging was very much cut, however; and some shot stuck in her sides. A few others, we presume, found their way on board; or we should not hear of four men killed, and twelve wounded, two of which died after amputation; total 16. We again remind the reader, that "slight hurts" are not included.

The armaments of both ships appear by the table. The Cyane's boat-gun, the Americans magnified into an eighteen-pounder; and by matching it with another carronade of the same calibre, made her mount 34 guns, instead of 23.

For the crew of the *Levant*, we are compelled to depend upon the American account of "prisoners received." The number obtained from her, the Americans state at 133; which, with the six actually killed, will make 139, for her complement on going into action; including seventeen or eighteen boys. Indeed her marines consisted also of boys;—raw recruits that scarcely knew how to handle their muskets.

The number of prisoners stated to have been received from the *Cyane*, is erroneous. Her established complement was 175 men and boys; but on going into action, she was short sixteen, and those chiefly out of her petty-officers and able seamen.

The Americans, according to custom, doubled the killed of one ship; and, within one, quadrupled that of the other. By which, and their own account of prisoners, they fixed their united crews at 336.

The *Constitution* mounted two thirty-two-pounder carronades, and a shifting eighteen-pounder, less than in the *Java's* action. She had a new commander; which, according to the report of a committee assembled early in 1812, to determine upon the expediency of establishing a navy-board, accounts for the change in her armament.

But a change of a far more important nature, was now discovered in the equipment of this fine ship;—no less than a furnace for heating shot. Not to be used, however, unless assailed by a "superior force." What would be considered on board an American ship, "superior force," may be partly imagined, by the numerous American descriptions of "equal force," to be found in these pages. Nay, as the *Levant* and *Cyane* were pronounced "superior in force," nothing, we presume, but the certainty of capturing them, and the loss that would be sustained by their destruction, prevented the full employment of the red-hot shot.

On the morning of the action, the *Constitution*, victualled of her complement, 469 men and 3 boys; total 472. An officer and seven or eight men were absent in a prize, which afterwards arrived at New-York. The *Constitution* must therefore have had, on leaving Boston, a crew of 450 at least; thus fully confirming the statements previously made, as to her complement of men in her action with the *Guerriere* and *Java*.

The *Levant* was captured on the 8th of March; and is again in the service. The *Cyane* arrived safe at New-York; and rates "20 guns" in a late "Naval Register of the United States."

The Constitution's log-book states : " At 6,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , commenced the action with broadsides, &c. at 6, 50, took possession of H. B. M. ship Cyane ;" and then proceeds to detail the Levant's capture, according to the extract given in page 52 ; comprising, from first to last, a period of three hours and fifty five minutes. Our astonishment may be conceived, on reading the following paragraph in the official letter of Capt Stewart :

" On the 20th February last, the island of Madeira bearing W. S. W. distant 60 leagues, we fell in with his Britannic majesty's two-ship of war, Cyane and Levant, and brought them to action about six o'clock in the evening ; both of which, after a spirited engagement of forty minutes, surrendered to the ship under my command."!!!

In estimating the force in this action, the tonnage of the largest British ship only, ought to be opposed to the Constitution's. The united tonnage of the Levant and Cyane, increases the superficial extent, not the thickness of their sides. The larger of the two has bulwarks, thirteen inches, the Constitution *twenty two* inches thick. But a still more material difference prevails ; for, while these consist of a solid body of oak, those have a space of several inches between each timber.

Nor does the relative broadside-weight of metal convey, by any means, a correct idea of the relative force of the combatants. Not only was our force divided, and, for the most part, separately engaged ; but we had carronades to oppose to long guns, within eight pounds each, of the same calibre : those long guns, too, employed with every advantage of distance and position, owing to the superior sailing of the Constitution, and her possession of the weather-gage.

It is the comparative weight in long guns, that will best show what quantum of force the two British ships had to contend with. How stands that ?

American.	lbs.	British.	lbs.
Seventeen long twenty-four's . . .	408	Two long nine's . . . . .	18

A superiority of TWENTY TWO to ONE !—Yet, says Captain Stewart, " Considering the advantages derived by the enemy from a divided and more active force, as also their superiority in the weight and number of guns, I deem the speedy and decisive result of this action, the strongest assurance which can be given the government, that all under my command did their duty, and gallantly supported the reputation of American seamen."

What means this scrupulous naval officer, by " the advantages" of being " divided ;" or by the term " more active," as applied to the British ships. So miserable a sailer was the Cyane, that every vessel but one, in a fleet she convoyed to Newfoundland, ran by her with ease ; and the Levant could outsail her a trifle only. " Speedy result :"—three hours and fifty five minutes !

After so mean an attempt to patch up his fame, by filching that of his honourable adversary, a compliment to British gallantry would have been wholly inconsistent. The bold advance of the Levant, at half past eight, would have elicited admiration from the breast of a Turk ; but Captain Douglas' opponent was—an American !

In spite of our indignation, we cannot forbear noticing, with a smile, the similarity that exists between the action of the Constitution and Levant, and that of the President and Little Belt. The disparity of force was the same. The two American commanders were alike, Hector of the first

*grade.* The same misrepresentation and extravagant boasting followed the two events.

A reference to the table of dimensions, will convey some idea of the appearance of the little fir-built corvette "ranged close alongside" this Leviathan of frigates. Yet the latter coolly fired a first, and then a second broadside, into her lilliputian opponent!

The "victory" over the *Levant* and *Cyane*, was pronounced in the United States, "one of the most brilliant feats recorded in naval history." Panoramic views of the action are still to be seen; nor need we doubt that the British ships appear, each singly, a full match for the American frigate.

Upon stepping on shore at Boston, the conqueror was almost smothered with the caresses of the citizens and *citizens*. Some appeared anxious, even, to touch the hem of his garment! The manager of the theatre knew his interest too well, not to crave leave to announce, that the gallant Captain Stewart and the officers of the *Constitution*, (all, of course, "in full regiments,") would honour with their presence, the evening's entertainment.

To recount all the extravagances which this event gave rise to in different parts of the union, among the federalists especially, would exceed the limits of this work. We cannot, however, refrain from indulging the reader, with the perusal of a short extract from the "*Boston Gazette*" of December the 14th :

"The *Cyane* is frigate-built; and is of the same tonnage, and capable of the same armament, as the late U. S. frigate *Essex*. The *Levant* is exactly equal in tonnage and armament to the late" (meaning the *new*, now lost) "U. S. ship *Wasp*; both (independently of the advantage which two ships have over one) being decidedly superior to the *Constitution*." A reference to table 7, will set this federal puff about the comparative size of the ships, in its true light.

In her general qualities, the *Cyane* resembled the *Boxer* : \* - with the exception, that the latter was a new vessel, the former an old one,† and so rotten, that, if not captured, she would certainly have been broken up. Thousands of New-York citizens, who visited Captain Stewart's fine prize-frigate, can testify as to the pulverized state of her timbers, wherever a shot-hole had exposed them to view.

The two court-martials that sat to enquire into the loss of the *Levant* and *Cyane*, were fully of opinion, that their capture was to be attributed to the very superior force of the American ship, and to her great superiority in sailing, which enabled her throughout the action, to keep at such a distance that their carronades were of little effect; while she was constantly keeping up a steady fire from seventeen long twenty-four-pounders; and that the officers and men evinced the greatest skill and intrepidity, defending their ships in a manner highly honourable to them, while it could be done with the least prospect of success. A high encomium was passed on the conduct of the ship's companies, (except three of the *Cyane*'s men, who deserted to the Americans,) for their loyalty, in resisting the repeated offers made to them to enter the service of the enemy.

It was stated upon oath by the British officers, that the crews of the two ships were for three weeks, kept constantly in the *Constitution*'s hold, with hands and legs in irons, and only three pints of water for the twenty-

\* See above p. 35.

† Built in 1801.

four hours.—This, too, in a tropical climate !—That after the expiration of the three weeks, upon the application of Capt. Douglas, one third of the men were allowed to be on deck, four hours out of the twenty four; but had not the means of walking, being still in irons.

That on mustering the crews when they were landed at Maranham, five of the *Levant's* boys were missing; and that upon application and search for them, two were found locked up in the American captain of marine's cabin. That a black man at Maranham was employed as a crimp, and enticed one of the *Levant's* boys to enter the American service.

Upon these facts, let the reader employ his own thoughts. If he possesses a British heart, he will need no prompter.

(R)

## ST. LAWRENCE and CHASSEUR, priv.

This schooner, when fallen in with, was carrying dispatches from Admiral Cockburn relating to the *Peace*. That of itself would unfit the men for fighting; yet they behaved gallantly.

No official account has been published. The Americans state the action to have lasted only fifteen minutes; and that the *St. Lawrence* was then carried by boarding.

The schooner it appears, had six killed and eighteen wounded; total 24. The *Chasseur*, by the American returns, five killed and eight wounded; total 13.

The armaments and crews of the two vessels appear by the table. The Americans gave the *St. Lawrence* two guns more than she mounted. Her shifting nine-pounder is brought into the broadside. The *Chasseur* had ports for fighting nine guns of a side.

The British vessel was a mere shell, having no bulwarks whatever, unless a one inch board can be called so. She was formerly the American letter of marque *Atlas*. The *Chasseur* has stouter quarters than our eighteen-gun brigs; and is esteemed one of the fastest sailers out of America.

The Americans boast that the *Chasseur*, on a former cruise, "fought" two sloops of war. By her log, as published in a New-York paper, we find she did "exchange a few shots" with one of our brigs; and, on another occasion, was "fired at" by a second; but, each time,—took to her heels. How many American privateers besides the *Chasseur*, have "fought" British ships in a similar manner?

(S)

## PENGUIN and HORNET.

This action took place off the island of Tristan d'Acunha. The want of a British official account, again invests us with that unpleasant and difficult office,—extracting truth from American details.

The British vessel, according to the American account, had the weather-gage, and surrendered after an action of “twenty two minutes;” in which her fore-mast and bowsprit were cut away, her main-mast completely crippled, and her hull riddled with shot. The brig’s damages, indeed, led to her destruction on the second morning after the action.

The Penguin lost her brave commander, the boatswain, and eight men killed; her second lieutenant, purser, two midshipmen, (each had a leg shot off,) and twenty four men wounded, four of whom died afterwards; total 38.

The Americans say the Hornet received several grape, but not a single round shot in her hull; nor, beyond the loss of her spanker-boom, any material wound in her spars. Her rigging and sails were very much cut. They acknowledge a loss of two killed, and eleven wounded; including among the latter, the captain and first lieutenant; total 13.

According to a well known vulgar adage, Captain Biddle’s assertions ought to be received with caution. It was he who, when first lieutenant of the Wasp, and prize-master of the Frolic brig, wrote home, that the latter “mounted eighteen thirty-two-pounder caronades”; pointing out, at the same time, that she was “superior to the Wasp.”

The Penguin mounted the same as the brig Frolic; but the Americans converted her long sixes into twelves, and gave her swivels on the capstan and in the tops. The usual bridle-port, Mr. Biddle, while sick in his cabin, describes thus: “She had a spare port forward, so as to fight both her long guns of a side.”—We wonder it did not occur to him, that she could also fight one of her “swivels” through the hawse-hole.

By adding the killed to the number of prisoners stated to have been received, the Penguin’s complement of men and boys (at least sixteen of the latter) would be 123; including twelve supernumerary marines received from the Medway. But Mr. Biddle says, “The enemy acknowledge a complement of 132.” This is easily explained. The Americans knew the establishment of men and boys for a brig of the Penguin’s class, was about 120; and to that number they have added, the “twelve supernumerary marines” acknowledged to have been received from the Medway.

The Hornet’s armament has already been given. Her complement of men in the action, is stated on the part of the British, to have

been 165. She is, we know, allowed three lieutenants and a lieutenant of marines, the same as the *Wasp* and *Peacock*; whose complements, without supernumeraries, were 171 each; and with them, 175 and 182.— Captain Biddle says, the *Hornet* was “eight men short of complement;” meaning, no doubt, of the number with which she left port. Allowing that she had only two supernumeraries, the number of men she had in the action would still be 165.

Captain Biddle, when he wrote his official letter, was confined to his cabin by a painful wound in the neck. It must have affected his brain, to judge from his animated description of the *Penguin*'s size. “She was shorter,” he says, “upon deck than this ship by two feet, but she had a greater length of keel, greater breadth of beam, thicker sides, and higher bulwarks.” Since the arrival of the *Hornet* in port, the *Penguin*'s “length on deck” has been published at “110 feet; breadth 31 feet 6 inches,” and so forth. In table 7, these *accidental* errors will be found corrected.

“An extract of a letter from an officer of the sloop of war *Peacock*,” (in company with the *Hornet* two days after the action,) published in a Boston paper, contains the following extraordinary statement:

“On examining her (the *Penguin*'s) guns after the action, a thirty-two-pounder-carronade on the side engaged, was found with its companion as nicely putted and stopped in, as it was on the day she left Spithead.”

That the *Penguin*'s crew consisted principally of newly-pressed men, little boys, and foreigners, and therefore, of many disaffected persons, the difficulty of obtaining men when she was commissioned, (only in Sept 1814,) renders more than probable; but, for many reasons, we cannot credit the above statement of the *Peacock*'s officer. Captain Biddle's omitting to notice the circumstance, is, however, no proof against it; as the fact would demonstrate clearly, that he had one gun less in broadside opposed to him; which would proportionably diminish from his “splendid victory.”

The same letter affirms, that the *Penguin*'s officers “ascribed their misfortune entirely to the superiority of the men belonging to the *Hornet*; and repeatedly said, they would be glad to try it again with her, if the *Penguin* was manned with such men.” This is probable; and would be quite sufficient to account for our defeat.

As Britons, we should be ashamed to offer the disparity of numerical force in this action, as any excuse. We wish it had been the lot of the *Curlew*, *Rifleman*, or any other equally well-manned brig of the *Penguin*'s class, to have fallen in with the *Hornet*. The boarding-opportunity would not have been lost, we are sure, by the worthlessness of the crew.

We must allow that the gunnery of the *Hornet* was excellent: such indeed as might be expected from men, who had been some years in the same ship; and during that time, constantly drilled at the guns. The Americans deserve every credit for making this their principal object. We cannot but regret, however, that the *Hornet* did not meet an opponent, possessed of similar advantages; one who would have proved American bottom, as well as skill.



TABLE 2nd.

Shewing the names, guns-mounted, men, and tons-burthen, of British ships of war, captured and destroyed, without action, by American force, since the 18th of June, 1812.

Ships' names.	Guns.	Men.	Tons.	When captured or destroyed.	By what force.	Refer to note.
Dr. of Gloster. . . . .	10	—	164	April 26, 1813	Com. Chauncey's sqd.	(T)
Highflyer. . . . .	5	31	209	Sept. 9th. „	President frigate.	
Hamilton. . . . .	3	22	76	Oct. 4th. „	Com. Chauncey's sqd.	(U)
Confiance. . . . .	2	20	72			
Pictou. . . . .	13	71	211	Feb. 14, 1814.	Constitution frigate ; and burnt.	
Nancy. . . . .	2	—	54	August. „	Burnt at Mackinaw, Lake Huron.	
Hermes. . . . .	27	—	339	Sept. 15th. „	Battery at Mobile.	(V)
7.	62	155	1125			

(T)

This vessel fell into the hands of the Americans, at the capture of York in Upper Canada. It is uncertain, whether or not any guns were mounted. Her totally unserviceable state, confined her to Sackett's Harbour during the remainder of the war.

After plundering York, the Americans ascertained, that a ship on the stocks had been burnt previous to their arrival. This vessel was intended, we understand, for a twenty-gun ship ; but Commodore Chauncey magnified her into " a thirty-two-gun frigate."

As the vessel was only in frame, we shall consider the seventy-four's frame destroyed at Washington, as a full equivalent ; and not insert either in the tables.

(U)

These schooners (late the U. S. schooners Grawler and Julia) were conveying five transport-sloops and boats, with troops on board ; bound from

the head of Lake-Ontario to Kingston. One vessel was burnt, and one escaped; leaving five, including the Hamilton and Constance, in Commodore Chauncey's hands.

The troops, according to the American account, belonged to De Watteville's regiment: and, with their officers, consisted of 222. The naval officers and seamen taken, amounted to no more than are stated in the table.

One or two British merchant-vessels were, upon some other occasion, driven on shore by Commodore Chauncey's fleet. The American "prize-list" notices two "name-unknown schooners" of nine guns each, destroyed on this lake; which must have been the above private vessels.

Should a sett-off be required, an account laid before Parliament, on the 1st of February 1814, states that two ships of 22 guns each, and 198 men and two others of 18 guns each, besides four smaller vessels, were captured from the Americans on the Canada-lakes. But, as we can gain no particulars respecting the four larger vessels, they have not been estimated. The two small schooners which we took at Detroit on the 16th of August, were retaken from us on the 9th of October following; and, on that account, do not appear in either table.

#### (Y)

This ship, together with some smaller vessels, was making an attack upon Fort-Bowyer, on Mobile point, near Pensacola: when, her cable being cut by shot, she drifted within six hundred yards of the battery.

Every effort to get her afloat proving unavailing, she was set fire to by her commander and crew; and blew up the same night.

Her complement was, by the Americans, augmented from 128 to 175; "150 of which" says the account, "were lost, 85 were killed or wounded on board the other ship, and several on board the other vessels."

Fortunately, little or no loss occurred. Were we to sum up all the men asserted to have fallen victims to American prowess, during the war-operations on the coast, it would nearly amount to the complements of the ships employed.





(W)

## CHESAPEAKE and SHANNON.

On the second of April, 1813, the Shannon, accompanied by the Tenedos of similar force, reconnoitred the harbour of Boston; and discovered lying there, the Congress frigate, ready for sea, the President, nearly so, and the Constitution, under repair.

On the thirteenth, the Chesapeake, Captain Evans, from a cruize of 115 days, got in unperceived; and on the sixth of May, foggy weather and a sudden favourable shift of wind, enabled the President and Congress to avoid the two British frigates, and escapeto sea.

Having ascertained that the Chesapeake would soon be ready again, but the Constitution not until a month or six weeks, Captain Broke, on the twenty fifth of May, took a supply of provisions and water from the Tenedos; and detached her, with orders not to rejoin him before the fourteenth of June.

On the twenty sixth of May, the Shannon recaptured the brig Lucy; and, on the twenty ninth, the brig William; both belonging to Halifax. A meeting with the Chesapeake being now his sole purpose, nothing but the circumstance of those vessels belonging to that port, induced Captain Broke to weaken his crew, by sending them in. The master of the Lucy and four or five of the Shannon's supernumeraries, took her in charge; and a midshipman and four men, the William. When this was done, the Shannon mustered 284 officers, seamen, marines and supernumeraries, and 21 boys; total 305.

On the afternoon of the thirtieth, the Shannon fell in with the British privateer-brig, Sir John Sherbrooke. This vessel had on board, fifty two Irish labourers, taken three days previous, out of the American privateer Governor Plumer; which had captured the ship Duck, from Waterford to Burin, Newfoundland, having these men on board as passengers. Thirty of them had entered on board the Sir John Sherbrooke; and the remaining twenty two were now pressed into the Shannon.

Early the next morning, the doubly-auspicious first of June, Captain Broke addressed to the commanding officer of the Chesapeake, a letter of challenge; which, for candour, spirit, and gentlemanly style, has rarely been equalled. This letter was confided to a Captain Slocum, bound into Salem; but it did not reach Boston, until several hours after the Chesapeake had sailed.

As soon as Captain Broke had forwarded the challenge, the Shannon stood in, with colours flying, close to Boston light-house; and there laid-to. The Chesapeake was seen lying at anchor in President roads, with royal-yards across. At nine A. M. she fired a gun, and loosened sails; and between twelve and one, weighed and stood out; crowding all sail, with a light breeze in her favour.

The Shannon ran out, under easy sail, until four o'clock; when she hauled up, and laid-to. Just previous to this, the Chesapeake also hauled up, and fired a gun. Both ships again bore away, the Shannon, with her fore-sail brailed up, and her main-top-sail braced flat, and shivering.

At a few minutes past five P. M. Boston light-house bearing west, distant about six leagues, the Shannon again hove-to, under top-sails, top-gallant-sails, jib and spanker; keeping her royal-yards still across, owing to the lightness of the breeze.

The Chesapeake came down upon the Shannon's starboard quarter, in a very handsome manner; having three engines flying, one at the mizen-royal-mast-head, one at the peak, and one in the starboard main-rigging. She had also, flying at the fore, a large white flag, inscribed with the words "FREE TRADE AND SAILOR'S RIGHTS;" supposing, perhaps, it would damp the energy of the Shannon's crew.

The Shannon had only an old rusty blue ensign at the peak; nor was her outside appearance at all calculated to inspire a belief, of the order and discipline that reigned within.

It was thought, at first, from her manoeuvres, that the Chesapeake intended passing under the Shannon's stern; especially so, as the latter was, at that time, without steering-way. Captain Brooke ordered his men, in that case, to lay down flat; so as to avoid, in some degree, the raking fire. But Captain Lawrence, either overlooking or waiving this precaution, at thirty minutes past five, gallantly luffed up, within hail, upon the Shannon's starboard quarter.

Captain Brooke had directed his men to fire as their guns would bear, and to aim principally at the enemy's ports. The first and second shot were from the Shannon's after-most main-deck gun, and quarter-deck carronade; just as the Chesapeake's fore-mast came in a line with the Shannon's mizen-mast. Both shot took effect.

The Chesapeake fired her whole broadside in return. The superiority of the Shannon's was evident, from the havoc it made among the Chesapeake's officers and men; upon her quarter-deck, especially.

Just at the close of the second broadside, the Chesapeake fell on board the Shannon; the fluke of the latter's waist-anchor, (which, to assist in trimming the ship by the stern, had been stowed in the main-chains,) entering the former's quarter-gallery-window.

The shot from the Shannon's after-most guns, now had a fair range along the Chesapeake's decks; beating in the stern-ports, and sweeping the men from their quarters: the shot from the fore-most guns, at the same time, entering the ports from the main-mast aft, did considerable execution.

About this time, an open cask of musket-cartridges, standing abaft the Chesapeake's mizen-mast for the use of the marines, caught fire and blew up; but did no injury whatever. The Chesapeake's head had now fallen off, bringing her close alongside the Shannon: whose mizen-mast was nearly opposite the end of the former's spanker-boom.

Captain Brooke, seeing the favourable moment, called out "Board;" and, accompanied by the first-lieutenant and about twenty men, sprung on the Chesapeake's quarter-deck. There, to his surprise, not an officer or man was to be seen. On her gangway, about twenty Americans made a

slight resistance ; but were soon driven towards the fore-castle. Some of these attempted to get down the fore-hatchway, but failed, by crowding together. Others leaped overboard ; and very few survived.

Between thirty and forty of the Shannon's marines, quickly followed the first boarding-party. These drove down the men who were ascending the main-hatchway ; cleared the main and mizen tops ; and secured the quarter-deck.

The Chesapeake's fore-top was, in the mean time, stormed by midshipman Smith and his top-men, about five in number ; who either destroyed, or drove on deck, all the Americans stationed there. This gallant young man deliberately passed from the Shannon's fore-top, along the fore-yard-arm, which was braced up, to the Chesapeake's, also braced up ; and thence into her top. The relative position of the ships brought their fore-yards nearly upon a line ; thus favouring the enterprise.

Just at the close of the action ; and while Captain Broke was calling on his men to give quarter, he received a severe sabre-wound at the back part of his head. Some of the men that were near him, hastily tore strips from their shirts, to wrap round the head of their beloved commander. He told them to go on, and not mind him. Captain Broke then sat down on a coil of rope : and soon afterwards, faint with loss of blood and exertion, was carried on board his own ship.

The first-lieutenant of the Shannon was struck on the head with a grape-shot from one of that ship's fore-most guns, while hoisting the British colours over the American. Two guns were discharged, unfortunately, before the officer commanding them, knew of the Chesapeake's surrender ; by which, six or seven of the Shannon's men shared the lamented fate of Mr. Watt, and several others were wounded.

Almost immediately that the British colours were hoisted on board the Chesapeake, the anchor which had got foul of her quarter-gallery, carried it away ; and the two ships separated. The Shannon, lowering her boats, soon sent on board a supply of men. At about eight o'clock, the prisoners being divided and properly secured, the British ship and her fine prize, bent their course for Halifax.

Between the discharge of the first gun, and the period of Captain Broke's boarding, ten minutes only elapsed ; and in four minutes more, the Chesapeake was completely his.—Hundreds of spectators from Boston and the surrounding neighbourhood, expressed their astonishment at the speedy termination of the firing ; and, it will be recollected, the firing did not cease, until the very moment of victory.

What a happy circumstance it was, that during the whole of the day, no British cruiser, public or private, came in sight. If we except a very numerous assemblage of American gun-boats and pleasure-yachts, the two frigates had the doing to themselves.

The Chesapeake was severely battered in her hull ; on the starboard quarter, particularly. A shot passed through one of her transoms, (of immense thickness,) and several entered the stern-windows. She had two main-deck guns, and one carronade, entirely disabled. One carronade, also, was dismantled ; and some carriages were broken.

Her three lower-masts, especially the main and mizen masts, were badly wounded. The bow-sprit received no injury ; nor was a spar of any kind

shot away. Her lower rigging and stays were a good deal cut ; but neither masts nor rigging were damaged, so that they could not be remedied, if necessary, without going into port.

Dreadful was the slaughter on board of her. She lost a lieutenant of marines, the master, and at least, seventy five petty-officers, seamen and marines, killed ; her gallant commander, first and fourth lieutenants, wounded mortally ; her second and third lieutenants, the chaplain, five midshipmen, and eighty two petty-officers, seamen and marines, also wounded ; about forty three of them severely ; total, killed and wounded, 170 ; exclusive of ten or twelve, that, in our returns, (on account of smart-money,) would have been noticed among the wounded.

In confirmation of the above account of the Chesapeake's loss, her late surgeon writes from Halifax, that the " number of killed and wounded is estimated at about 160 to 170 ;" and he would, perhaps, not include those with very slight hurts. On the other hand, Lieutenant Budd, in his official letter, gives the *names* of only forty seven killed ; enumerating the wounded, as we have done, at 92. Another American account makes the total loss, 144. This subject will be better understood, when the ship's complement of men in the action, comes to be discussed.

The injuries sustained by the Shannon bore no comparison to those of the Chesapeake. Five round shot passed through her ; one only below the main-deck. Several eighteen-pounders stuck in her starboard side, ranged in a line, just above the copper. A long iron bar was also discovered sticking in her side, a short distance under water.

Her fore and main-masts were slightly injured by shot : her bowsprit (previously sprung) and mizen-mast, were badly wounded. No other spar was damaged. Her pole-mizen-top-mast, from its shortness compared to the Chesapeake's, may have given rise to the assertion, that her " mizen-royal-mast" was shot away. Her rigging was not much hurt.

The Americans flattered themselves, that the Shannon was reduced to a sinking state. So contrary was the fact, that, had she badly wounded, and a part of the prisoners, (owing to their superior numbers,) been removed from the ships, they could have proceeded to Portsmouth, with as much ease and safety, as to Halifax, N. S.

The Shannon lost in the action, her first Lieutenant, the purser, captain's clerk, twenty seamen, marines, and supernumeraries, and one boy, killed ; her commander, boatswain, a midshipman and fifty six seamen, marines, and supernumeraries, wounded ; of whom twenty four, including the captain and boatswain, (the latter since dead,) were wounded severely ; total, killed and wounded, 82.

The Chesapeake mounted fourteen long eighteen-pounders of a side upon the main-deck ; eight thirty-two-pounder carronades of



a side upon the quarter-deck ; two more of a side, and one shifting long eighteen, upon the fore-castle : total 49. She had also a twelve-pounder carronade ; but it is doubtful whether or not it was mounted in the action. A very simple but well-contrived elevating carriage, and another for boat-service, belonged to it. The gun itself, quite perfect, was found dismounted ; therefore we cannot, with propriety, estimate it.

The Chesapeake could easily have fought all her fore-castle carronades, as well as the eighteen-pounder, upon the broadside ; as she had five ports, besides the bridle, on each side. Her fore-castle was considerably larger, than that of any frigate in the British navy.

All the American navy-lists of 1798, rate the Chesapeake a 44 ; and she then must have mounted 55 guns : bringing into the broadside, including her elevating carronade, 28 guns.

Several vague accounts having been published, respecting the species of shot found on board of her, we have, at the end of note (Z) given a rough sketch of the most extraordinary among them ; and, to complete the groupe, have added some varieties, taken out of other American vessels.

We do not say, there was any thing unfair in the Americans using star, chain, and double-headed shot. It is, however, no longer matter of surprise, that the masts and rigging of our ships, in all the unsuccessful actions, were so quickly cut to pieces and destroyed.

A desire to torment, as well as to destroy, must have influenced the Americans ; or why were the Chesapeake's cannisters made to contain angular and jagged pieces of iron ; or the musket-cartridges, three and four buck-shot each ?

A large cask of lime, with the head open, had been standing on the fore-castle, but was knocked to pieces by one of the Shannon's shot. A bag of the same, was found in the fore-top. Long after the Chesapeake arrived in Halifax, the remains of the lime were to be seen about the fore-castle. For what precise use it was intended, we cannot conjecture.

Now for the most difficult part in the estimate of an American ship's force ; her complement of men on going into action.

On the nineteenth of June, at the Admiralty-Office, Lieutenant George Budd, the surviving commanding officer of the Chesapeake, swore as follows : " He does not know the number of hands on board at the time of capture, but will procure a copy of the muster-roll. He supposes there might have been about 340 hands on board at the time of capture. He thinks they were Americans ; but there were some Danes and Swedes on board."

Lieutenant Budd's official letter bears date four days previous. He there gives the names (before, as it would appear above, he had " procured a copy of the muster-roll") of 47 of his crew killed. How happened Mr Budd not to know, that " the number of hands" belonging to the Chesapeake, whose names were entered in the agent's

for prisoners' books, amounted to 326. That number, added to his "47 killed," would have produced 373, instead of "about 340."

As Mr. Budd's memory had not recovered itself, at the time of his examination on oath, it must have been still more confused, when he wrote his official letter; which accounts, readily enough, for his inaccuracy respecting the number of the Chesapeake's killed.

Two muster-rolls were found on board the Chesapeake. One contained the names of 389; the other, written up to the morning of the action, of 391. Both contained numerous discharges; some as late as the 31st of May. We may therefore conclude, that, on the *morning* of the first of June, the Chesapeake had a complement of 391.

It was well-known in Boston, that several volunteers joined the Chesapeake, as she was getting under way at half past twelve. Several of the petty-officers, after they were sent to Melville Island, confessed, that thirty or forty hands, principally from the Constitution, came on board; and were not reported to the purser.

In corroboration of several men having joined the ship a very short time before the action, a number of bags and hammocks were found lying in the boats stowed over the booms; and in direct proof that some of the Constitution's men were on board the Chesapeake, three or four of the Guerriere's Americans, who, after that ship's capture, enlisted on board the Constitution,\* were among the prisoners taken out of the Chesapeake; and were immediately recognised by their former shipmates, now, as stated before,† serving on board the Shannon.

Even 440, the number given as the complement of the Chesapeake in Captain Brooke's letter, was not founded on mere surmise. After the Chesapeake had been several weeks in Halifax, a letter was found in one of her lockers, dated in 1811, from Robert Smith Esquire, the then Secretary of State, to Captain Samuel Evans, at Boston; directing him to open houses of rendezvous for manning the Chesapeake; and enumerating the different classes, to the amount of 442. This, too, was in times of profound peace; when no Shannon was cruising in defiance off the harbour.

Again, the Congress, of the same rate as the Chesapeake, arrived at Portsmouth N. Hampshire, according to a published letter from one of her officers, with 410 men of her crew on board; besides having lost four by death, and mannaed a prize with some others.

We have no doubt, that the Chesapeake's complement on going into action, was upwards of 405; at which amount, therefore, it is fixed in the table. Among the prisoners, there were but ten, distinguished by the American officers as boys; and only three that would come under that denomination, on board a British ship of war. Of Danes, Swedes, and blacks, there appeared to be about thirteen.

The gunner, Matthew Rogers, was an Irishman: the carpenter, George Miller, believed to be a native of this Province. There were six or eight more British subjects among the prisoners. By some mismanagement, the first council, notorious traitor, instead of being sent home for trial, was allowed to return, laughing in his sleeve, to his *adopted* country.

The Chesapeake's men, in general, were remarkably stout; especially.

\* See above p. 15.

† Ibid.

when contrasted with the Shannon's; most of whom were rather below the middle stature. As one proof of stoutness, the handcuffs that were on deck, ready to secure the British crew, caused, when applied to the wrists of the Americans, many of the latter to wince with pain.

The Shannon mounted upon the main-deck, the same as the Chesapeake; upon the quarter deck, six thirty-two-pounder carronades and one long nine, of a side; a twelve-pounder-carronade on the starboard, and a brass six-pounder on the larboard side. To make room for these, both gang-ways, had been, by Capt. Broke's orders, converted into ports; and the long nines placed there. Two twelve-pounder-carronades were also mounted as standing stern chasers. One object in placing them there, was to trim the ship. Upon her fore-castle, the Shannon mounted two thirty-two-pounder carronades and one long nine, of a side; making a total of 52 guns; of which, 25 only could be used in the broadside. She had, we believe, a swivel mounted in one of her tops; but, having brought the heaviest broadside\* into the estimate, and being uncertain as to the calibre of the swivel, we shall take no further notice of it.

Captain Broke, in his letter of challenge, says, "The Shannon mounts twenty four guns upon her broadside, and one light boat-gun; eighteen-pounders on her main-deck, and thirty-two-pounder-carronades on her quarter-deck and fore-castle." If there is here any variation from the fact, it is that, instead of having on her upper battery all thirty-twos, she had two *nines*, of a side, besides her boat-gun. Yet the editor of the American *Porte-folio*, has had the assurance to complain of Captain Broke, for having "under-rated his ship's force."

The Shannon had, on going into action, 215 officers and seamen, 55 marines, and 18 recaptured men, making 284; also 21 boys, (about thirteen of them under twelve years of age,) and 22 landmen from Ireland, forty eight hours only in the ship; of whom not more than four could speak a word of English, and not one of whom had ever been at sea, until he took his passage on board the Duck. We must, however, add them to the complement; which they therefore swelled up to 330.

Three of the Irish supernumeraries fell in the action. To say these rough sons of Erin, amidst the new and awful scene they were exposed to, behaved gallantly, would be superfluous, considering the land they came from. Their native valour may also have been whetted a little, by the treatment they experienced from the crew of the American privateer.

The first public-account of the Shannon's action, estimated her complement at 335; including, by mistake, the midshipman and four men, that were absent in the brig William; and who again joined their ship, soon after her arrival in Halifax. Here is

\*Larboard broadside 532 lbs.

another instance of correctness in Captain Broke's letter of challenge. He stated the *Shannon's* complement, to consist of "330 men and boys"; yet, say the Americans, "he under-rated his ship's force."

The dimensions of the two ships appear in the table. The *Shannon*, in her masts and rigging, equalled the largest 38; yet, was exceeded in both, by the *Chesapeake*, "only a 36." How the latter would look by the side of a British 36, the *Phæbe's* dimensions will shew.

The *Chesapeake* was built at Norfolk in 1797: and cost, says Mr. Clark, "220,677 dollars and 80 cents," or £61299 : 8 sterling. A Virginia paper of that time, commends her greatly, for model, strength, and workmanship. Previous to her capture, she had undergone a complete repair; and, if no accident happens, will run fifteen years, before she requires taking into dock.

Her fastenings are superior to such as we commonly use; her seams throughout, remarkably close; and her timbers considerably stouter, than any 38's in the service. Her bulwarks, or top-sides, are far thicker than those of a British, or French-built, 38; and as solid as live oak can make them. Her outside appearance has been much improved in England, by giving her a figure-head; and the *Chesapeake*, although she was "the worst frigate in the navy" of the United States, is now, confessedly, one of the finest of her class in the navy of Great Britain.

The usual disparity between the combatants, in the height of tops, did not occur in this case. The poor riflemen little expected to be so intruded upon, in his snug quarters. The death-speeding tube, so often his friend, refused its accustomed aid. The arm, not the eye, was now alone to save him. There he was over-matched: and soon thrown head-long upon his own deck.

The *Shannon* was built, by contract, at Chatham, in 1806. Owing to two frigates of the same name\* having been lost, the sailors pronounced her (as the Americans have the *Chesapeake*) *unlucky*: and none wished to enter on board. Captain Broke was appointed to her in June, but did not join her until the 14th of September, 1806. Her complement was made up of draughts from different ships; and the men frequently quarrelled among themselves. Captain Broke's judicious plan of discipline, aided by his fatherly conduct, soon reconciled all parties. He made them, in time, a fine ship's company; and this, although they consisted, for the most part, of the extremes of young and old.†

His admirable system of gunnery, and the sights he employed upon his guns, were not recent measures. Captain Broke had

\* Both built at Deptford; one, a 22, of 387 tons, in 1757; the other, a 32, of 726 tons, in 1796.

† Dr. Stevens, the boatswain, was in Lord Rodgey's action.

proved the utility of both, four or five years before he engaged the Chesapeake. All the frigates on the Halifax station, early in 1813, had profited, more or less, by the Shannon's example.

It will now be proper to give the American account, of this decisive and quickly-dispatched action. We will again refer to Mr. Clark. He says :

“ Shortly after Captain Lawrence arrived at New-York, he was appointed to command the Chesapeake frigate. It was with reluctance he accepted the command of this vessel ; for she was considered the worst ship in the navy. The Chesapeake then lay at Boston, whither captain Lawrence repaired. When nearly ready for sea, the British frigate Shannon appeared off the harbour, and made signals expressive of a challenge. A written challenge is also stated to have been sent by captain Brooke, the commander of the Shannon, but which captain Lawrence never received. Favourable circumstances, and superiority of force, were on the side of the Shannon. The Chesapeake, on the contrary, laboured under particular disadvantages. Her commander was very slightly acquainted with his crew ; the greater part of whom were new recruits. She, as has been already observed, was but an indifferent vessel, and at the moment the Shannon appeared, was not in complete order for an engagement. But Lawrence had himself challenged a British vessel ; the sight of one riding in defiance before him, was too much for his pride to bear. He, in consequence, put to sea on the first of June, having hoisted a white flag with “ Free Trade and Sailors’ Rights.” He addressed his men in a short discourse, but it was received with no marks of approbation. Discontent was apparent among a part of the crew, and complaints were muttered of not having received their prize-money. The boatswain, a Portuguese, was the principal instigator of this dissatisfaction. Lawrence, unacquainted with his crew, resolved to remove the cause of their complaint. He ordered the purser to give prize-checks to those who had received none. On perceiving the Chesapeake coming out, the Shannon bore away. The Chesapeake followed until 4 o’clock in the afternoon, when she hauled up and fired a gun. On this the Shannon hove-to. The two vessels continued manœuvring in silence until 6, when they were within pistol-shot of each other. The action then commenced by a tremendous and destructive broadside from each vessel, which, on board the Chesapeake, killed the sailing-master, Mr. White, and mortally wounded the fourth lieutenant, Mr. Ballard. A musket-ball struck captain Lawrence in his leg, and inflicted a painful wound. He however leaned on the companion-way, and continued to command and encourage his crew. A second and third destructive broadside was discharged from each ship, in which the Chesapeake had evidently the advantage ; but unfortunately her first lieutenant Ludlow was severely wounded, and carried below. Three men, in the course of 12 minutes, had

been successively shot down from her helm. A hand grenade, thrown on the quarter-deck, caused a great explosion, and set fire to some musket-cartridges, but did no other injury.

"The bugleman who should have called the boarders, as ordered by Captain Lawrence, did not do his duty. The Shannon had sustained so much injury that her commander, Commodore Brocke, was preparing to repel any attempt of boarding from the Chesapeake. But at this moment Brooke, perceiving the havoc his fire had occasioned on the deck of the Chesapeake, jumped on board her with about 20 men. They would soon have been driven back, but all the officers on deck were either killed or wounded. The second Lieutenant Budd, who commanded the first division below, led up the boarders; but only fifteen or twenty men followed him. With these he defended the ship until disabled by a wound. Lieutenant Ludlow, though wounded, hurried on deck, where he soon received a mortal sabre-wound. Sixty additional men being thrown on board from the Shannon, the crew of the Chesapeake, who had no officer to direct and rally them, were over-powered. The Chesapeake, however, was not surrendered by an act of submission, but was taken possession of by a force that overwhelmed all opposition."

"The greater part of the Americans were killed and wounded by the British boarders. The loss of the Shannon was principally occasioned by the cannon of the Chesapeake. The latter received little injury in her hull: whereas the former had several shots between wind and water; and had her crew been repelled in the attempt to board, she would in all probability have been captured."\*

Let us first endeavour to describe Mr. Clarke's "new recruits." Upon the Chesapeake's arrival in Boston, on the 18th of April, those of her crew whose terms of service were expired, received their discharges. The greater part, it is understood, re-entered. To fill up the deficiencies, four houses of rendezvous were opened. The moment a man declared himself a candidate, he received a dollar, and accompanied an officer to the ship; where he was examined by a board of officers, consisting of the master, surgeon, and some others, as to his knowledge of seamanship, muscular strength, age, &c. If fully approved of, he signed the articles; and remained where he was. If rejected, he returned home with a dollar in his pocket. Frequently, out of five boat-loads that would go off to the ship in the course of the day, three would come back, not eligible. So much for Mr. Clark's "new recruits."

Has Mr. Clarke the effrontery to call "the boatswain a Portuguese"?—The Chesapeake's boatswain was brought in, mortally wounded; and his name in the agent's book, is, "Peter Adams." He was boatswain of the Constitution, when she took the Guerriere; and so far from being a "Portuguese," or even a British subject, was a native American.

During her last cruize, the *Chesapeake* captured four prizes. One of which, the *Volunteer*, got in safe ; and was "said to be worth £150,000 sterling." If, then, there was any "discontent" about "prize-money," it must have been among her former crew ; which sufficiently explains, why the purser was ordered, "to give prize-checks to those who had received none."

"The cause of complaint" thus effectually removed, the men would naturally be stimulated to make more prize-money ; and (what glee they must all have been in !) the very object of their wishes, was beckoning them to come and take her.

Captain Lawrence was appointed to the *Chesapeake*, soon after Captain Evans arrived. We know, that the American crews are kept constantly drilled at the guns, in harbour, as well as at sea. What authority, then, has Mr. Clark for saying that, as late as the first of June, the *Chesapeake's* "commander was very slightly acquainted with his crew" ?

Inconsistencies and contradictions, are indeed so glaring, in every part of this apologetical essay, that to dwell upon them any longer, would be taxing the reader's patience.

Whether or not a hand-grenade was thrown from the *Shannon*, we are unable to say. British hand-grenades are not, however, such frightful things as those Mr. Madison has authorized the employment of.\* They are only small shells, containing about a pound and a half of powder. On the home-stations, British ships are supplied with them ; but they are seldom used, merely causing smoke and confusion.

We shall not honour Mr. Low, by citing any of his trash on the mortifying subject, beyond what may be necessary to shew, how happily he chimes in with his fellow-labourer, Mr. Clark. Thus ; while the "*Naval History*" dubs the *Chesapeake* "the worst ship" in the American navy, the "*History of the war*" declares the *Shannon*, "the best frigate in the British navy."

In most of our unsuccessful actions, the numerical superiority of the Americans, has amounted, by the time the flag was struck, to two, three, four, and, in some instances, seven to one ; and in naval actions generally, the conquerors out-number their prisoners. But, if we take the whole that were alive on each side, the reverse was the fact, when the *Chesapeake* surrendered to the *Shannon* ; the former having 326, the latter only 307, hands on board. By leaving out the badly wounded on both sides, the numbers are made equal, 283 each. Look at the relative numbers that were on board the *Chesapeake*, when her crew "were overpowered" ; fixing the number of boarders, as Mr. Clark has done, at 81.—Yet the ship "was taken possession of by a force that overwhelmed all opposition." !!!

Although the British frigate, in broadside-weight of metal, men, and size, was one-tenth inferior to the American, we consider it—an equal match. At the same time, much credit is due to Captain Brke, for having done the business so quickly ; as well as for having sought and commenced the attack, close upon an enemy's shore ; where, in the event of a long action, crippled ships, and a continuance of the prevailing light air, a fresh force would have assailed the *Shannon*, and a friendly port been open to the *Chesapeake*.

\*See below p. 74.

(Low's Hist. of the War p. 56.

Laying aside those "favourable circumstances," the well-proved skill and valour of the Shannon's crew, would, there can be little doubt, have ensured success. Had long range been the Chesapeake's choice; and, with her possession of the weather-gage, the battle been protracted to some hours, instead of being over in the short space of fourteen minutes.

To convey a slight idea how the loss of this frigate, although "the worst ship in the navy," was received by the people of the United States, we venture to subjoin an extract of a letter, written in the autumn of 1813, by an Englishman, then residing at Philadelphia:

"On Saturday, June the 10th, accounts arrived here from Boston, that the Chesapeake had sailed out to attack the Shannon, who was waiting for her off the port. Dash greeted his neighbour on the expected victory; and the warmest among the navy-men triumed their revile, to run through the Shannon's name in the large sheet-may-list posted up on the Reading-room wall; and transfer it to the upper or American part."

"Next day, about noon, came *another* account. All flocked to the Exchange, to know the truth of so "improbable" an event. By 2 o'clock, South-Second street became almost impassable, from the crowd collected in front of the coffee-room."

"With many, the dinner-hour came in vain: the speaking-joint cooled, relasted, on the table. The Sabbath was forgotten, and creditors of every sect, discoursed that evening to empty benches. The printing-presses were put in motion; soon appeared, reams of hand-bills, bearing on top, by way of corrective to the bitter position, the capture of Port-George; then, the reported one of the "unlucky" Chesapeake."

"On Monday, the hour of part saw hundreds, with gloomy visages pacing the street to and fro; looking occasionally at their watches: as if to interest old Time himself in their perturbed feelings. Others, on foot and on horse-back, went forward to way-lay the tardy man. It came, and brought,—ere'd disappointments!—a mere echo of the preceding day's news."

"On Wednesday, a federal paper had in large characters, the cheering word,—"*Chesapeake not taken*;"—founded on the assertion of some fisherman, who declared that, when they saw the two vessels, the Shannon was running away, and the Chesapeake in full pursuit."

"This accorded so well with the general opinion of American officers, on the one hand, and of its natural consequence, British sailors, on the other, that many gave credit to the fisherman's story."

"The next day's Journal, another federal print, wisely accounted for all the previous mistake, by *supposing* that the red-looking flag hoisted on board the Chesapeake so soon after the two ships parted, was not the British ensign, as we had been several, but the



the bloody flag, run up as a signal that--NO QUARTER WOULD BE GIVEN, because combustible materials had been thrown into the ship."

"This julep flowed down the throat like molasses and milk; and its effects were soon visible in the altered countenances of Doctor *Dr. Clarke's* patients."

"It has been doubted by many, whether these two restorative draughts, the "fishermen's story" and the "Bloody flag," were not compounded by order of the Board of Health; the desponding looks of the citizens portending, really, a worse disease, than their endemic plague, the yellow fever."

"However, after a week of suffering such as no humane man could wish, even an enemy to endure, a Halifax account confirmed the worst."

"The national feelings, galled as they are, it is now attempted to heal, by roundly proclaiming, the decided superiority of the Shannon, in size, guns, and men; and that some British sailors that were *accidentally* on board the Chesapeake, "all ran below, while not a native American shrunk from the conflict."

"A Baltimore federal editor discovers a panacea in "her flag never having been struck as an acknowledgement of defeat, but on the contrary waved to the last;" and gravely adds,—"It is an awful warning to them of what they are to expect from an encounter with our ships of war."

"As to Captain Brooke, he is declared to be a tall raw-boned Irishman, as strong as Sampson, and perfect master of the broad-sword, which, by all account, he dealt about him most lustily."

"Then, says a Boston editor—"Boarding is a dernier and desperate resort; and loading the boarders, always a duty assigned to the first lieutenant."

"Another modest editor observes,—"If after being out of port but five hours, our vessel stood any thing like an equal chance, it is two to one she would have carried the Shannon, if the Chesapeake had been at sea ten days before the engagement."—Another informant—"That Captain Lawrence did not receive Captain Brooke's letter of challenge before he sailed, that he might have been deliberately prepared for the battle."

"Surely, the want of sea-lips could not have been felt, when it was so calm, that the bay was covered according to a Boston paper, "with craft and boats, among which were three or four gun-boats,) to witness the expected encounter."

"As to not being prepared, the ship "was ready for sea only in the morning," says another paper, and knew the Shannon was waiting outside for her, says a Liverpool friend that saw the vessel ready and paid off; then stood out in the bay."

"Not many hours previous to the fatal meeting, the *Chesapeake* may be supposed to have received intelligence of the sailing

here that, on the morning of the battle, Commodore Bainbridge urged Captain Lawrence to take on board the Chesapeake, the five guns formerly belonging to her; but that he replied, he would send on shore six of those he then had on board; and bring in the Shannon that same afternoon."

### *Description of American dismantling-shot.*

Figure *a* is called a star-shot. It is made of wrought-iron; and, when discharged from the gun, expands like figure *c*. Each arm is about two feet in length. Some of these shot had five, others three arms. Figure *b* is called a chain-shot; also of wrought-iron. Its extended length is six feet; doubling up to the length of a foot. Figure *c* is an American double-headed shot. The above, together with single iron bolts, crow-bars, broken marling-spikes, &c. were taken out of the Chesapeake. The whole, weighing nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$  a ton, were sold at auction in Halifax; and the greater part has since been converted into horse-shoes and other articles of innocent utility.

Figure *d* is composed of two hollow half-spheres of wood, about half an inch thick. Through the two, about ninety large nails are driven; so that their points project outside. Two grape-shot are laid in one half; and the whole glued together. A fuse-hole is made, a quantity of powder introduced, and the following paper label pasted between the nails: "Patent Porcupine hand-grenades, made

by Nicholas C. Bachia, No. 15, Chatham street, New-York."—This *patent* affair, nails and all, is just seven inches in diameter. Figure *e* is a star-shot of a different description from *a*. Figure *f* is a front, and *g* a side-view of the same, when made up, ready to be introduced into the gun. The hand-grenade and the last shot, were taken out of an American armed vessel brought into Halifax.

### **ARGUS and PELICAN**

The Pelican arrived at Cork from a cruise, on the 12th of August, and sailed again the next day, in quest of the Argus, American ship of war.

which had been committing serious depredations on commerce in St George's Channel.

Fortunately, a fire of her own making, discovered the Argus, at four o'clock on the morning of the 14th, in latitude  $52^{\circ} 15' N$ ; longitude  $50^{\circ} 50' W$ . She made no attempt to escape, her commander being confident, as it afterwards appeared, of taking the Pelican.

At 5 A. M. the Argus fired her broadside; which was quickly returned. A close action now ensued, within musket-shot distance; and continued until forty three minutes past six; when the Argus was boarded on the starboard bow; the brave William Young who led the party, receiving his death from the fore-top, just as he stepped upon the enemy's gun-whale. The Americans did not offer to rally; but immediately hauled down their colours.

The Argus was tolerably cut up in her hull; but, like the Chesapeake, had no spar shot away. She lost in the action, two midshipmen and four seamen, killed; her commander, (a brave officer,) carpenter, one boatswain's mate, and one seaman, mortally; her first lieutenant and five seamen, severely, and eight others, slightly wounded; total 24.

On board the Pelican, two shot passed through the boatswain's and carpenter's cabins. Her sides were filled with grape-shot; and her rigging and sails injured a good deal. Even her royals did not escape; but no spar was seriously hurt. She lost one seaman killed, besides the master's mate, Mr. Young; and five seamen slightly wounded; total 7.

The American brig mounted nine twenty-four-pounder carronades, and one long twelve, of a side; total 20. She had ten broadside-ports, without a bridle; and was a remarkably well-equipped vessel.

She sailed from America on the 21st of June, with, as appears by a New-York paper, her full complement of men on board. After landing Mr. Crawford, the minister, at L'Orient, the Argus cruised near the Irish coast; where, during a period of more than five weeks, she captured twenty sail of vessels; destroying all of them but four. Two of these she gave up to the prisoners; and two others, the Matilda and Betsy, she manned and ordered in. One was re-captured by the Revolutionaire; the other by the Leonidas.

The original complement of the Argus was 149; but, having manned those two vessels, she had in the action 136; all of which, except two or three, were stout, able fellows. She had three lieutenants, besides her commander; also a lieutenant of marines; the same as our first-class twenty-gun ships. The men had iron skull-caps, to enable them to repel boarders with greater effect.

The Pelican mounted eight thirty-two-pounder carronades, one shifting twelve-pounder-boat-carronade, and one long six, of a side; besides two sixes mounted as standing stern-chasers; total 21. The last two sixes, as they must be counted, had better have been in the sea. This brig resembled all others of her class; and could fight six guns only of a side, besides the boat-gun.

Her complement was 122; but, her master and five men being absent in a prize, she went into action with only 116; including a great proportion of boys.

Soon after the action, Captain Maples dispatched the Argus to Plymouth;

himself proceeding to Cork, to which station the Pelican belonged. About the time of parting company, he wrote his official letter. He states the Argus to be "360 tons"; her complement, when she sailed, to have been "149 men, but in the action 127;" and that she lost, "her officers say, about forty killed and wounded." Captain Maples must have obtained all this from the American officers; who, except the wounded, had been taken on board the Pelican. The tonnage meant, of course, American measurement. The other statements were ascertained to be incorrect, as soon as the Argus arrived at a British port.

The Argus was built at Boston in 1802-3, for government-service. Her bulwarks were very high; and constructed with the usual regard to the safety of the men. She was a very swift sailer; and possessed great stability. Nothing but her age, prevented her from being added to the British navy.

The United States' government-print, the "National Intelligencer," speaks of the Argus thus: "She is admitted to be one of the finest vessels in the service of her class; and the model of such a vessel is certainly inestimable."—But, reader, mark, this was previous to her capture.

The dimensions of both brigs will be found in Table 7. The additional breadth of the Pelican alone, makes her exceed the Argus in tonnage. The latter was a much heavier rigged vessel; which, added to her increased length, made her appear larger on the water than the Pelican.

We shall not say, as the Americans did, in the *Hornet* and *Peacock's* action; that twenty-fours are as good as thirty-twos.\* We know better. The Argus mounted, however, long twelves to long sixes, and her broadside-weight of metal, was within one sixth of that of her adversary. In men, (and the action was quite close,) she was superior in the same proportion. How then are we to account for losing but one man killed by shot, during a cannonade of forty three minutes?—It would appear, that the Americans perform best in gunnery, when they have high odds in their favour.

The Pelican's men deserve credit for firing better than common; and so do her officers, for having drilled them at the guns.

How consolatory it is, to compare the condition of the least damaged of our six captured brig-ships, at the moment of surrender, with that of the U. States' ship of war, Argus. Then the hostile crews, how stood their brave numbers? Deduct from the crew of the Argus, six killed and four mortally wounded, and 126 remain:—actually, ten more than the Pelican commenced action with. We should like to hear from the editor of the American *Porte-folio*, and other republican philosophers, in what consists, that "moral and physical superiority" of the American, over the British sailor, about which they so often bludge themselves.

It would have pleased us better, had the *Argus* and *Pelican* been, in gun, more equally matched: yet, in broadside-weight of metal, men, and size, collectively, the former was only one thirty-fifth inferior. The *Shannon* was one tenth inferior to the *Chesapeake*: and we called that an equal match. But the Americans, after all, pay us too high a compliment, to admit the same, between two vessels of far less disparity of force, the *Argus* and *Pelican*.

No American official account appearing, until upwards of eighteen months after the action, Mr. Clark had to rely upon his own powers of exaggeration, for saving the honour of the nation. He begins: "The *Pelican*, carrying 22 guns, the largest brig but one in the British navy, (probably, the *Peacock* is here meant,\*) fell in with the *Argus*. A very desperate engagement ensued, and lasted forty three minutes, when the *Pelican* succeeded in capturing the *Argus* by boarding. The English newspapers state the loss of the Americans in killed and wounded at forty. The *Pelican* was in every respect a superior vessel to the *Argus*: she was of 435 tons burden. Her shot in pounds was 660. The burden of the *Argus* was 298: her shot in pounds 402."†

This "desperate" affair was far too modestly related, to suit, without some alteration, the "History of the War." Although that "faithful record of events" was published three months after Lieutenant Watson's official letter, (wherein the *Pelican*'s force in guns is accurately given,) had gone the round of the American papers; and although the title-page of the work assures us, that the contents have been "carefully compiled from official documents," Mr. Low introduces the following "impartial" statement of the force of the two vessels:

"*Argus*—16-24 pound carronades, 2 long 9's—burthen 298 tons, 94 men fit for duty, 5 sick, the rest absent in prizes.—*Pelican*—22-32 pound carronades, 2 long 9's and 2 swivels—burthen 584 tons, 179 men, 11 of them volunteers for the occasion, from ships at Cork."‡

The American official account is dated "Norfolk, March 2d, 1815." The first thing that strikes us is, for precision of the writer. He states the action to have commenced at 6; and to have ended at 6, 27. This period he divides as follows:—"6, 4,—6, 8,—6, 12,—6, 14,—6, 18,—6, 25,—6, 30,—6, 33;" and so crowds with circumstances, each of these trifling intervals, that the reader, unless he takes the trouble to sum up the figures, rises with a conviction, that this gallant defence against "superior size and metal," lasted two hours, instead of forty seven minutes.

The force of the *Argus* is not stated; nor the *Pelican*'s loss, or number of men, in the action; but the letter contains an additional excuse for the capture, as novel, as it is ridiculous; no less than "the fatigue which the crew of the *Argus* underwent, from a very rapid succession of captures."

\* See above p. 30.

† N. H. vol. 1, p. 215.

‡ Hist. of the War, p. 1.

This "rapid succession of captures," twenty in all, occupied a period of thirty eight days. But, after so much boasting about the "superior valour of the American far," something was required to account for 126 Americans, fully armed and prepared, yielding, without a struggle, to 114 Britons.

(Y)

ESSEX and } PHOEBE.  
CHERUB:

About the middle of February, the Phoebe and Cherub arrived at Valparaiso, South America ; where they found, lying at anchor, the Essex American frigate, having in company, an armed prize-ship of 20 guns and 60 men, named the Essex-Junior.

On the 28th of March, when the two American ships had appointed a rendezvous, and arranged every thing for sailing, a fresh breeze from the southward drove the Essex to sea. She braced close up ; and, in attempting to pass to-windward of the two British ships then cruising off the port, carried away her main-top-mast. She now tried to regain the limits of the port ; but, finding she could not, ran into a small bay on the east side of the harbour, and let go her anchor, "within pistol-shot of the shore" ; where, with springs on her cables, she awaited the attack.

The Phoebe, which was the weather-most ship, having lost the use of her main-sail, jib, and main-stay, was unable to beat up against a strong wind, so as to close the Essex, until thirty five minutes past five. The action then commenced ; and at twenty minutes past six, the Essex surrendered.

The Cherub used every exertion against the baffling winds and occasional calms, which followed the heavy firing, to close near the Essex ; without which, her battery, consisting of all carronades, (except one long six of a side,) could produce no effect whatever ; but she did not succeed.

The upper works, masts, and rigging of the Essex were much damaged ; but she was not in such a state, as to give the slightest cause of alarm, respecting her being able to perform a voyage to Europe with perfect safety. In Captain Porter's language, the injuries of the Essex are described thus : "My ship was cut up in a manner which was, perhaps, never before witnessed. The shattered state of the Essex will, I believe, prevent her ever reaching England."

The Essex lost in the action, by Captain Porter's account, her first and third lieutenants, and fifty six a men and marines, killed and mortally wounded ; her master and thirty eight seamen severely, and two midshipmen and twenty four seamen, slightly wounded ; total 123. But only twenty three men were found dead on board ; and only forty two of the prisoners, 161 in number, (sixteen of which had been saved from drowning

by the *Phœbe's* people,) were wounded. Three of the wounded, Captain Hillyar states, were taken away by Lieutenant Downes of the *Essex-Junior*, during the action. Capt. Porter applies the term "missing" to thirty one men; by which he makes the loss of the *Essex* to amount, altogether, to 151.

There can be no doubt, that the loss of the *Essex* in killed and wounded was greatly exaggerated, to make her defence appear the more honourable. The carnage described by Captain Porter, is not reconcileable with the slight injury done to the hull of the ship; nor with the number of killed and wounded found on board of her, and known to have been taken away.—Twenty three killed, and forty five wounded, are in the usual proportion; which strengthens our belief, that none of the killed had been thrown overboard.

The *Phœbe's* injuries were trifling. She had a few shot-holes between wind and water, which were got at without lightening. Her main and mizen masts, and her sails and rigging, were rather seriously injured: the latter, she partly replaced out of her well-stored prize.

Not the slightest damage in hull, spars, rigging or sails, is stated by Captain Hillyar, to have befallen the *Cherub*. A shot from one of the *Essex's* long guns, must, however, have reached her; to account for the small loss she sustained.

Captain Porter gives the following gloomy description of the three ships after the action:—"Both the *Essex* and *Phœbe* are in a sinking state; and it was with difficulty they could be kept afloat, until they anchored in Valparaíso next morning; and I also think it will be out of their power to repair the damages of the *Phœbe*, so as to enable her to double Cape-Horn. All the masts and yards of the *Phœbe* and *Cherub* are badly crippled, and their hulls much cut up; the former had eighteen twelve-pound shot through her, below her water-line; some three feet under water. Nothing but the smoothness of the water saved both the *Phœbe* and *Essex*."

As might be expected from Captain Hillyar's account of the damages of the *Phœbe*, she lost only her first lieutenant and three seamen, killed; four seamen and marines, severely, and three, slightly wounded; total 11. The *Cherub* lost one marine killed; her commander, severely, and two marines, slightly wounded; total 4; making the loss on board both ships, 15.

The *Essex* mounted twenty thirty-two-pounder carronades and three long twelves, of a side; making 46 guns:—a tolerable armament for a 32-gun frigate. She was compleatly stored and provisioned for six months.

Previous to her leaving the Delaware, in October 1812, she had a complement of 328; of which eleven only rated as "landsmen," according to the list of the crew, at page 4 of that jumble of filth and falsehood, the "*Journal of a craze*," published by Captain Porter,

Nine men being left behind, sick, the *Essex* sailed on her last cruise, with 319. Upon her arrival in the Pacific, she recaptured the crews of some American whale-ships; and, during a cruise of six months, captured ten other whalers under the British flag; but most of them partly owned and manned by Americans. The united crews of these Anglo-American ships amounted to 302; many of which, Capt. Porter states, entered on board the *Essex*. Two or three of the prizes, he fitted out as cruisers; and, among them, the *Atlantic* of 355 tons; which was named the *Essex-Junior*. As soon as the near approach of the *Phœbe* was bringing the action to a

close, Captain Porter took advantage of the *Essex* being "three quarters of a mile from the shore," to direct such of his men as could swim, to make their escape. In his official letter, he pretends, that "the flames bursting up each hatchway" was his reason; but we hear of no traces of fire being seen, when the ship was taken possession of.

"Our boats," says he, "were destroyed by the enemy's shot; I therefore directed those who could swim to jump over-board, and endeavour to gain the shore. Some reached it; some were taken; and some perished in the attempt; but most preferred sharing with me the fate of the ship."

We have the number of those that "were taken," and of the "missing," or those that "perished in the attempt." The only difficulty is, as to those that "reached the shore." How easy it would have been to enumerate the latter; and then we should have no dispute, about the complement of the *Essex* on going into action. When we refer to the "Journal of a cruize," and find so many unimportant events minutely detailed, we have no plea for ascribing the above omission to Captain Porter's remissness.

All the ship's books having been destroyed, Captain Hillyar had to rely upon Captain Porter's word, as to the number the *Essex* victualled; which he then stated at "upwards of 260;" but has since reduced to 255. The "Journal of a cruize" contains so many acknowledgments of Captain Porter's infringement of his word, when he had a purpose to gain, that we value it not a rush; and as to his "honour,—the strongest bond I can give," he says,—we would not disgrace the lowest seaman in his ship, by supposing him possessed of so little.

Taking "those that could swim" and reached the shore, and those that escaped in boats, to amount to, at least, 100; and adding thereto, the 68, killed and wounded, and the 119, prisoners received unhurt, we have, for the *Essex's* complement, 287:—probably, much beneath what it really was; for were we to add 154, being Captain Porter's "killed wounded and missing," to the 119, received unhurt, (the usual way of fixing the complement,) the amount would be 273; exclusive of the "some" that reached the shore.

That concealment was Captain Porter's object, is evident from this, that, in his voluminous correspondence on the subject of the action, he gives the names of the killed, wounded, and missing, as well as of those paroled by Captain Hillyar, but does not even enumerate the crew of the *Essex-Junior*; although Captain Hillyar had explicitly demanded, and he as explicitly promised to furnish "a list." And when the *Essex-Junior*, in her way home as a cartel, arrived off Sandy-Hook, and was boarded by the *Saturn*, the fears of Captain Porter that his plans of chicanry would be discovered, and lead to his detention, prompted him to take to the ship's.



boat ; carrying with him, besides a large portion of the crew, specie, and other valuables. With these he landed at New-York ; where he “ was welcomed by the cheering huzzas of the populace, and conveyed to his lodgings in a coach drawn by his fellow-citizens.”\*!!

The armaments of the two British ships, as well as their complements of men and boys in the action, will be found in Table 3. Captain Porter declared the force opposed to him was, “ eighty one guns and five hundred men.” Notwithstanding his predictions, the *Phœbe* and her prize arrived safe at Plymouth, before the end of the year.

The *Essex* was built at Salem ; and launched on the 20th of September, 1799. She cost, according to Mr. Clark, “ 139,362 dollars, 50 cents” ; or £38,711 : 5 sterling.

The *Cherub*, as stated before, had very little share in the action ; but as she was present during the whole of it, we have only good-fortune to boast of, in the capture of this South-sea marauder. Had the *Essex-Junior* tried to effect her escape, when her consort left port, the *Cherub* would have been detached in pursuit ; and a second British and American frigate, tolerably matched, left to themselves.

Captain Porter states the action to have commenced “ at fifty four minutes after three” ; and that he struck his flag “ at twenty minutes after six P. M. : ” a period of two hours and twenty six minutes. Captain Hillyar states, that his first fire commenced at a little past four, and continued about ten minutes ; but, owing to the *Phœbe*'s great distance to-leeward, produced no visible effect ; and that his second fire, “ a few random shot only,” from having, by wearing, increased his distance, was not apparently more successful. It was, as we have already mentioned, thirty five minutes past five, before the *Phœbe*'s shot commenced taking effect ; from which period, therefore, we have dated the engagement.

Notwithstanding the American official account of this action, is become the scoff of all reasonable men, Captain Porter's ends were fully answered ; to judge from the encomiums passed upon his conduct by Mr. Madison, in his speech to Congress, dated the 20th of September, 1814. The President there says :

“ On the ocean, the pride of our naval arms has been amply supported. A second frigate has indeed fallen into the hands of the enemy : but the loss is hidden in the blaze of heroism with which she was defended. Captain Porter, who commanded her, and whose previous career had been distinguished by daring enterprise, and by fertility of genius, maintained a sanguinary contest against two ships, one of them superior to his own, and other, severe disadvantages ; till humanity tore down the colours, which valour had nailed to the mast. This officer and his comrades have added much to the rising glory of the American flag ; and have merited

\*New-York paper.

all the effusions of gratitude, which their country is ever ready to bestow, on the champions of its rights, and of its safety."

We will not commit a paradox, by associating bravery with such a character as Captain Porter's; and we most sincerely regret, that this "champion of rights" did not meet a British officer who knew him, instead of the meek and gentlemanly Captain Hillyar. Guileless himself, he suspected no guile in others. He believed that an American national officer was governed, as he was, by principles of honour. Captain Hillyar therefore became, in his literary transactions, the dupe of the finished hypocrite, his prisoner. Captain Porter's behaviour towards his gallant opponent, would indeed rouse our indignation; had he not, by traducing,—honoured him.

Let us endeavour to trace what became of the twelve whale-ships captured by the *Essex*. On the 25th of July, Captain Porter dispatched home the *Georgiana*, armed with sixteen guns, manned with a lieutenant and about forty men, and laden with "a full cargo of spermaceti oil, which would be worth in the United States, about 100,000 dollars." She was captured by the *Barrosa*, 36. The *Policy*, laden also with a full cargo of oil, was re-captured by the *Loire*; and the *New-Zealander*, having on board "all the oil of the other prizes," by the *Belvidera*. The *Rose* and *Charlton* were given up to the prisoners. The *Montezuma*, it is believed, was sold at Valparaiso. The *Hector* and *Catharine*, "with their cargoes," were burnt at sea. The *Atlantic*, called the *Essex-Junior*, was, by Captain Hillyar's orders, deprived of her armament, and allowed to go to the United States as a cartel. The remaining three, the *Scringapatam*, *Greenwich*, and *Sir Andrew Hammond*, were left at the *Marqueses*, under charge of a Lieutenant Gamble; and have been since, either recaptured by the British, or taken possession of by mutineers. Thus have we the end of all the "prizes taken by the *Essex* in the Pacific, valued at 2,500,000 dollars"; and, as another item on the debit side of Captain Porter's account, the *Essex* herself now rates as a 36 in the British navy.

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## (Z)

### PRESIDENT and ENDYMION.

The *President*, Commodore Rodgers, arrived at Sandy-Hook, from a seventy five days' cruise, on the 18th of February, 1814. She underwent at New-York a thorough repair, equal almost to being rebuilt. Commodore Rodgers was appointed to the *Guerriere*, about to be launched at Philadelphia; and Commodore Decatur, whose ship, the *United States*, had been so long cooped up in New-London, to the *President*. Both commanders took with them, their officers and crews.

The *Endymion*, Captain Hope, sailed from Halifax, the latter end of September, 1814, upon a cruise, in Boston bay; and on the 9th of October, off Nantucket, failed in a boat-attack upon the *Prince of Neufchatel*, Ame-

rican privateer. She there lost her first lieutenant, Mr. Abel Hawkins, a mid-shipman, and twenty six petty-officers, seamen and marines, killed, and thirty five wounded, including her second lieutenant, a master's mate, and one or two midshipmen. The Americans captured the launch, with several men on board; and, we must admit, the defence of the privateer did great credit to her commander and crew.

On the 31st of October, the *Endymion* fell in with the *Saturn*, 56; bound direct to Halifax. Captain Nash took from her, besides a surgeon and his servant, one master's mate and twenty seven wounded seaman and marines, to convey them to the hospital; and sent on board the *Endymion*, to replace the severe loss she had sustained, (and that, too, among her prime hands,) a lieutenant, four midshipmen, three able seamen, twenty five ordinary seamen and landsmen, and five marines; total, 58. Thus recruited, the *Endymion* continued her cruise; and was afterwards attached to the squadron stationed off New-York.

The President, stored and provisioned for a cruise in the East Indies, and accompanied by the armed brig *Macedonian*, laden with supplies for her, sailed from New-York on the afternoon of the 14th of January, 1815. In going out, the President struck on a mud-bank; and, whatever Commodore Decatur may have found it convenient to say, got off without the slightest damage. The two vessels pursued their course; and, about an hour before day-light on the following morning, were discovered by the British ships.

Fortunately, an extract from the *Endymion's* log-book has appeared in print. It contains a circumstantial account of the day's proceedings; and bears upon the face of it, such incontestible marks of truth, that we, with pleasure, give it insertion.

"At day-light in the morning, all sail set in chase of a strange ship and brig in the east; wind N. W. and by N. *Majestic*, *Tenedos*, and *Pomone* in company. Passed ahead of our squadron fast. At 1 P. M. all hands at quarters, gaining fast on the chace, and leaving the squadron. At 1, 18, observed the chace to throw over-board spars, casks, &c."

"At 2, the chace commenced firing from her stern-guns. At 2, 30, returned the enemy's fire from our bow-guns. At 2, 39, a shot from the enemy came through the head of the larboard fore-lower-studding-sail, foot of the main-sail, through the stern of the barge on the booms, and going through the quarter-deck, lodged on the main, without doing any other damage. The chace keeping up a quick fire from her stern-guns, returned it as our bow-guns could be brought to bear."

"At 4, 10, shot away the enemy's jib-halyards. At 4, 20, shot away the enemy's fore-top-gallant-sheet; the enemy lusing occasionally to bring his stern-guns to bear. Gaining fast on the chace; observed that our shot did considerable execution, the enemy's shot passing over us. At 5, 10, gained the enemy's starboard quarter, and preserved the position; evidently galling him much."

"At 5, 30, the enemy brailed up his spanker and bore away, shewing a disposition to cross our bow and rake us. Put the helm hard-a-weather to meet this manœuvre; and brought the enemy to close action in a parrallel line of sailing."

"At 6, 4, the enemy commenced firing musketry from his tops; returned

it with the marine-party. Hauled up occasionally to close the enemy, without losing the bearing of our broadside ; enemy now distant half musket-shot. Our sails and rigging much cut ; the enemy's fire slackening considerably."

"At 6, 40, the enemy hauled up, apparently to avoid our fire. Succeeded in giving him two raking broadsides, and then hauled up also ; again placing ourselves on his starboard quarter. At 7, 15, the enemy shot away our boat from the larboard quarter, and lower, and main-top-gallant, studding-sails."

"At 7, 18, the enemy not returning our fire. At 7, 25, the enemy kept more away, and recommenced firing. At 7, 30, the enemy shot away the larboard main-top-mast-studding-sail, and main-brace. At 7, 32, the enemy hauled suddenly to the wind. Trimmed sails, and again obtained the advantage of giving him a raking fire ; which he returned with one shot from his stern-gun. The enemy much shattered. At 7, 40, the enemy kept more away, firing at intervals."

"At 7, 58, the enemy ceased firing. Observed him to shew a light ; called all hands to bend new sails, &c. Conceiving that the enemy had struck, ceased firing. At 8, 10, observed two of our squadron coming up. At 8, 52, new courses, main-top-sail, jib, fore-top-mast-stay-sail, and spanker, bent, and sails trimmed, ranging up with the chase."

"At 9, 5, observed one of our squadron run up on the larboard beam of the enemy, and fire into her ; which was not returned, but the light hoisted higher in the rigging. The ship of our squadron ceased firing, and shot ahead. At 9, 45, hailed by the Tenedos ; acquainted her of our not having a boat that could be hoisted out. Tenedos took possession of the chase."

The motionless state of the Endymion, while bending six new sails, reeving fresh rigging, &c. enabled the Pomone and Tenedos to pass ahead of her ; the latter only within hail. When these ships approached the President, she was standing to the eastward under a press of sail. The Pomone fired her broadside ; which hurt no one, and was not returned. The President shortened sail, and luffed close up, shewing a light in her mizen-rigging ; at the same time, hailing to say—she had surrendered. The Pomone, not hearing this, and mistaking the object of the light, fired a second broadside ; which, similar to the first, neither hurt any one, nor was returned. The President, after again hailing, that she had surrendered, hauled down the light ; and the Pomone did not fire again. The Tenedos had a fine raking position astern of the President ; but Captain Parker, believing she had struck to the Endymion, did not fire a shot. He merely sent a boat to take possession ; and his officer was the first on board.

This was at eleven o'clock at night. At three quarters past twelve, the Endymion, nearly as fresh as when she began the combat, got up to the President ; but the Majestic, although the ships were laying-to for her, did not join until three in the morning.

The President's starboard side was perforated with shot in all directions. Some, notwithstanding her twenty-two-inch bulwarks, passed completely through her. She had five or six guns disabled ; six feet water in the hold ; and, although her spars were all standing, her lower-masts were badly crippled.

She lost in the action, by the acknowledgment of her officers, three lieutenants, and thirty two seamen and marines, killed ; her commander, (very slightly,) master, two midshipmen, and sixty six seamen and marines, wounded ; total 105.

The *Endymion's* hull was comparatively uninjured. Two of her boats were destroyed ; and some of her spars seriously wounded ; but she suffered most in sails and rigging. A chain-shot, similar to figure bat page 74, cut twelve or fourteen cloths from her fore-sail ; stripping it almost from the yard.

She lost eleven seamen and marines, killed ; and fourteen seamen and marines, wounded ; total 25. No officer was hurt. The *Endymion* therefore did not lose, by the fire of the President frigate, half as many men, as in her boat-action with the privateer.

On the 17th, a violent gale of wind came on from the eastward ; in which the President lost all her masts by the board, threw several of her guns over-board, and was very near foundering. The *Endymion* lost her bowsprit, fore and main-masts, (owing chiefly to the rigging, where it had been knotted, giving way,) and most of her spar-deck guns. Both ships arrived at Bermuda ; as also the *Pomone*, with part of the prisoners.

The President's armament was, fifteen long twenty-fours of a side, upon the main-deck ; seven forty-two-pounder carronades, an eight-inch brass howitzer, or sixty-eight-pounder, upon a pivot-carriage, and one shifting long twenty four, of a side, upon the quarter-deck ; three forty-two-pounder carronades, and one shifting long twenty-four, of a side, upon the fore-castle ; and five brass four-pounders, on pivots, in her three tops ; making a total of 58 guns ; 33 of which she fought upon her broadside. It is believed she mounted, at the beginning of the war, one more carronade of a side upon the quarter-deck ; fighting her shifting long gun through the gang-way-port : which gave her 55 guns, besides her top-howitzers.

The only paper found on board, was her " Watch-bill " ; containing the names of 477. In our service, a ship of the President's class, would have upwards of ninety idlers, or persons not keeping watch. The prisoners received by the agent at Bermuda, amounted to 434. There were four or five others, whose wounds would not admit of their removal ; and seven or eight that died of their wounds. Estimating the whole at eleven ; and including the thirty five killed in the action, the President's complement would be 480.

The prisoners, excepting two or three boys, were tall, stout men ; and a great proportion known to be British subjects. Owing, probably, to the return of Peace, none of them were detained. Com-

modore Decatur, having in his official letter, enclosed a list of "24 killed," which he feared was "short of the number;" and having subsequently sworn, that the President's complement consisted of 450, affected much surprise, that the prisoners should amount to 434; making, with his "24 killed, which were "short of the number," 458.

The *Endymion* mounted thirteen long twenty-fours (six inches shorter than the President's) of a side, upon the main deck; one shifting twelve, and eight thirty-two-pounder carronades, of a side, upon the quarter-deck; and three thirty-two-pounder carronades of a side, upon the fore-castle; where she also had a long eighteen for a standing bow-chaser; making a total of 50 guns. Having twenty four ports only of a side; and the twelve-pounder-carronade being mounted, as usual, upon an elevating carriage, she could fight but 25 guns on her broadside.

On the 21st of September, a few days before she left Halifax, the *Endymion* victualled 239 in ship's company, 60 marines, and 27 boys; total 326. She had six men absent in a prize, and one man sick at the hospital; making, when they joined, a complement of 333. The number killed in the action with the privateer, and those sent on board the *Saturn*, were replaced with an equal number. To make the *Endymion's* complement, what it is stated to have been when she engaged the President, she must have pressed nineteen men. She then would have 319 men, and 27 boys; total 346.

The President was built at New-York, in 1797—8; and cost "220,910 dollars, and 8 cents," or £61,363 : 18 sterling. She is finished in a very superior manner; has stouter scantling than a British 74-gun ship; and, if we except the American *Guerriere* and *Java*, may be considered as the finest frigate in the world. In spite of the "hogged and twisted appearance," given her by the sentence of the court-martial, which sat to find excuses for her capture, this American 44-gun frigate now stands at the head of the class of 50-gun ships in the British navy; where, from the expensive repairs given her at New-York, she, in all probability, will long remain.

The first American account of the President's loss, published, was an extract of a letter from Commodore Decatur to his wife. After detailing his action with the *Endymion*, he says,—“In three hours the *Pomone* and *Tenedos* were alongside, and the *Majestic* and *Endymion* close to us. All that was now left for me to do was, to receive the fire of the nearest ships, and surrender; for it was in vain to contend with the whole squadron.”

Commodore Decatur had, no doubt, the same reason for using the word “ships” instead of “ship,” that Commodore Perry had, for substituting “their” for “her”; when, in his letter, he was describing the effect of the Detroit's fire, upon the *Lawrence*.\*

Another published letter is from “an officer whose situation on board the President gave him an opportunity of witnessing every event that occurred during the action.” He, alone, has had the hardihood to say,—“when, after receiving and returning a broadside, our flag was struck.” Another officer says, “after receiving four or five broadsides from the *Pomone*, &c.”

The commodore's official letter is dated on board the *Endymion*, three days after the action. We shall select the most prominent parts.

\*See above p. 52.

"The ship in going out, grounded on the bar; where she continued to strike heavily for an hour and a half." The pilot has no doubt long ago satisfied his fellow-citizens of New-York, that the latter part of this statement is completely erroneous.

After detailing the early part of the running-fight with the *Endymion*; and bringing it down to about half past five, the commodore proceeds, thus:

"It was now dusk, when I determined to alter my course south, for the purpose of bringing the enemy abeam; and although their ships astern were drawing up fast, I felt satisfied I should be enabled to throw him out of the combat before they could come up; and was not without hopes, if the night proved dark, (of which there was every appearance,) that I still might be enabled to effect my escape. Our opponent kept off at the same instant we did, and our fire commenced at the same time. We continued engaged, steering south, two hours and a half, when we completely succeeded in dismantling her. Previously to her dropping entirely out of the action, there were intervals of minutes, when the ships were broadside, in which she did not fire a gun."

We must pause to ask the commodore, if, when he was penning this charge against the *Endymion*, he had seen the returns of the President's surgeon.—Did ever a man make so complete a butt of himself!

"At this period, (half past eight o'clock,) although dark, the other ships of the squadron were in sight, and almost within gun-shot. We were of course compelled to abandon her. In resuming our former course for the purpose of avoiding the squadron, we were compelled to present our stern to our antagonist; but such was his state, though we were thus exposed and within range of his guns for half an hour, that he did not avail himself of this favourable opportunity of raking us."

We confess ourselves unable to comprehend how, if the President was making sail to get away, and the *Endymion* left in a dismantled, and therefore motionless state, the former could be "within range" of the latter's guns for "half an hour." But we will not let trifles interrupt us.

"We continued this course," says the President's commander, "until eleven o'clock, when two fresh ships of the enemy (the *Pomone* and *Tenacles*) had come up. The *Pomone* had opened her fire on the larboard bow, within musket-shot; the other about two cables' length astern, taken a raking position on our quarter; and the rest (with the exception of the *Endymion*) within gun-shot. Thus situated, with about one fifth of my crew killed and wounded, my ship crippled, and a more than four-fold force opposed to me, without a chance of escape left, I deemed it my duty to surrender."

Commodore Decatur must have interlined the above parenthesis, and omitted to substitute for "the rest," a term corresponding with the important "exception." It is the first time we ever heard one ship of a squadron designated by—"the rest." The commodore could not, surely, have had reference to the Dispatch-brig, even if present: although, most probably, she had gone in chase of the *Macedonian*. We recollect, he says, in the letter to his wife, (which the commodore did not perhaps imagine would be published,)—"and the *Majestic* and *Endymion* close to us!" We leave this trilling variation to be explained by the commodore's friends.

After complaining that the *Endymion* fired too slowly, and did not rattle

him enough ;—after boasting, too, of having dismantled, and been compelled to abandon her, who could expect the writer would afterwards draw out—“one fifth of my crew killed, my ship crippled”!

“I feel satisfied,” says the invincible commodore, “that the fact of their having beaten a force equal to themselves, in the presence and almost under the guns of so vastly a superior force, when, too, it was almost self-evident, that, whatever their exertions might be, they must ultimately be captured, will be taken as evidence of what they would have performed, had the force opposed to them been in any degree equal.”

Were it possible, that a native of China, who had never seen a ship in his life, but who understood the use of cannon and musketry, could have surveyed the *President* and *Endymion*, at about two o'clock in the afternoon, and again at half an hour past eight at night, of the 15th of January, we would cheerfully be governed by his answers to the following questions, put to him at those several periods :—“Which of the two ships do you consider to be the most powerful?”—“Which of the two ships do you consider to be the one that was “beaten”?”

Although Commodore Decatur, when he wrote his official letter, had been three days on board the *Endymion*; and must have satisfied himself of the extent of that ship's loss in the action, he was so artful as to say :

“Her loss in killed and wounded must have been very great. I have not been able to ascertain the extent. Ten were buried after I came on board, (56 hours after the action,) the badly wounded, such as were obliged to keep their cots, occupy the starboard side of the gun-deck, from the cabin-bulk-head to the main-mast.”

The commodore here set his countrymen to calculating, how many dead men could be “thrown overboard” in the course of “thirty six hours;” how many cubic-feet there were in the space “between the cabin-bulk-head and the main-mast” of a large frigate; and how many “badly wounded” could be there stowed. For the honour of Captain Hope, he chose to give the bodies of his late gallant shipmates, Christian burial: instead of allowing them to be thrown into the sea, the moment they fell. This object must have been lost upon the American officer: otherwise, he wilfully concealed the fact.

In this very long official letter, it is no where stated, that a single man was hurt by the *Pomone's* two broadsides. But when the commodore arrives at New-York from Bermuda; and is urged by his friends, to give the thing, if possible, a brilliant appearance, he composes a second or supplementary letter, dated “New-York, March 6th”—An “extract” is all that has appeared in print; and we here give it (except a paragraph about a wounded midshipman,) at length :

“In my official letter of the 18th January, I omitted to state, that a considerable number of my killed and wounded was from the fire.



of the *Pomone*; and that the *Endymion* had on board, in addition to her own crew, one lieutenant, one master's mate, and fifty men, belonging to the *Saturn*; and when the action ceased, was left motionless and unmanageable, until she bent new sails, rove new rigging, and fished her spars; nor did she return to the squadron for six hours after the action, and three hours after the surrender of the *President*. My sword was delivered to Captain Hays of the *Majestic*, the senior officer of the squadron, on his quarter-deck; which he with great politeness immediately returned. I have the honour to enclose you my parole, by which you will perceive the British admit the *President* was captured by the squadron. I should have deemed it unnecessary to have drawn your attention to this document, had not the fact been stated differently in the *Bermuda Gazette*, on our arrival there; which statement, however, the editor was compelled to retract, through the interference of the governor and some of the British officers of the squadron."

To confute the first of these supplementary assertions, as well as to elucidate some other parts of this interesting combat, we here produce "the deposition of Mr. Henry Bowie, schoolmaster of the *President*, taken before the Honourable Tudor Hinson, surrogate at Bermuda."

Mr. Bowie swears, "that, after the action with the *Endymion*, Commodore Decatur ordered all hands to go below, to take care of their bags; as he believes, because the commodore did not consider they were to fight any more."

"One of the ships commenced firing, and Commodore Decatur called out—"we have surrendered;" then giving this deponent the trumpet to hail and say—they had surrendered."

"The *Pomone* (which appears to have been the firing ship) did damage to the rigging of the *President*; but did not kill or wound any person, all hands being then below. They did not return the *Pomone's* fire."

"When the two ships were coming up, a light was hoisted in the mizen-rigging of the *President*, as this deponent conceived at the time, as an ensign or flag; but as he afterwards had reason to believe, as a sign that they surrendered; for this deponent observed to the commodore, that as long as that light was hoisted, the ships would fire, upon which Commodore Decatur ordered it to be taken down."

The *Endymion's* "addition to her crew," has already been explained. That she "fished her spar," before day-light next morning, we have strong doubts. The time of her, as well as of the *Majestic's*, "return to the squadron," we take from a statement, which an officer of the *President* encloses to a friend in the States, for publication; and in praise of which he writes as follows:

"Allow me to enclose a statement of our unfortunate rencontre, as published by the officers of the *Pomone's* gun-room; which, with

one or two particulars, is essentially correct. When the President struck, the Tenedos was on our stern, and the Pomone on our bow, both within musket-shot. The ship was first boarded by the boats of the Tenedos." This hand-bill account of "the Pomone's gun-room officers," states, that "at three quarters past twelve the Endymion came up, and the Majestic at three in the morning; and the commodore himself fixes the period of his surrender, at "eleven o'clock."

In waiting to deliver his sword to "the senior officer of the squadron," we recognise an old French trick, frequently practised, when a second British cruizer has come up, after the enemy's ship had received as heavy a drubbing, as the President got from the Endymion. The commodore's subsequent conduct proves, that his sword being "with politeness returned," only adds one to the many instances of misapplication of British magnanimity.

Is not the commodore sufficiently acquainted with the British prize-act, to know, that every one of his majesty's ships in sight at the commencement of the chase, or the final surrender of a prize, is, whether she co-operates or not, entitled to share; for that reason, the word "squadron" was inserted in his parole.

If the commodore will read a short extract from Captain Hayes' official letter, he will perhaps regret that he dwelt so forcibly, upon his sword having been returned to him; as well as upon the formal language of that insignificant "document" his parole.

"As the day advanced," says Captain Hayes, "the wind declined, giving the Endymion an evident advantage in sailing; and Captain Hope's exertions enabled him to get his ship alongside of the enemy, and commence close action, at half an hour past five in the evening; which was continued with great gallantry and spirit on both sides, for two hours and a half, when the Endymion's sails being cut from the yards, the enemy got ahead. Captain Hope taking this opportunity to bend new sails, to enable him to get his ship along-side again, the action ceased, till the Pomone getting up at half past eleven at night, and firing a few shots, the enemy hailed to say, she had already surrendered."

"And now, Sir, a very pleasing part of my duty is, the bearing testimony to the able and masterly manner, in which the Endymion was conducted, and the gallantry with which she was fought; and when the effect produced by her well-directed fire upon the President, is witnessed, it cannot be doubted, but that Captain Hope would have succeeded, either in capturing, or sinking her, had none of the squadron been in sight."

The brief letter of Captain Hope, enclosing a return of his slight loss, concludes thus: "Where every individual has so conspicuously done his duty, it would be injustice in me to particularize; but I trust the loss and damage sustained by the enemy's frigate, will shew the steady and well-directed fire kept up by his majesty's ship under my command."

The commodore is correct in saying, that "the fact" was "stated differently in the Bermuda Gazette." It was, indeed; for it was there asserted, that the Endymion alone engaged the President; and that the latter was riddled, the former scarcely injured, by shot.

Not one jot of this was the editor called upon to "retract." But the Bermuda Gazette of February 1st, having stated that sixty eight men were discovered stowed away on board the President, Commodore Decatur gave

his honour it was not so ; and Mr. Ward was induced to recall the statement.

The Gazette of the 16th of March, however, declares the original statement was correct ; and that the act was authorised by Commodore Decatur himself. Upon this, the Governor of Bermuda desired the editor to retract what he had now said. But, relying more upon the word of a British lieutenant,\* than the honour of an American commodore, Mr. Ward flatly refused ; and was, accordingly, dismissed from his office of King's printer.

To impose the delusion upon the world, it was necessary to have a "Court of Inquiry on the capture of the frigate President." Nearly two columns of a newspaper are filled with "the result of the court." Therefore, we shall only skim the cream, for the reader's amusement.

"We have been more minute in our investigation," says Commodore Murray, "than might at first view have been deemed necessary ; but as there has been a diversity of opinions prevailing among the British commanders, concerned in her capture, it was desirable in our view to lay before the world, in the most correct manner, every circumstance which led to that event, which has afforded another high proof of American heroism, and so highly honourable to her commander, officers, and crew, that every American citizen must feel a pride in knowing, that our flag has been so ably defended."

Where was the "diversity of opinions among the British commanders" ? Has the honourable court ventured to make this solemn declaration, upon what appeared in the "hand-bill published by the Pomone's gun-room officers" ?—Let us however proceed.

"If victory had met its common reward, the *Endymion's* name would have been added to our list of naval conquests. In this unequal conflict, the enemy gained a ship, but the victory was ours."\* \* \* \* \* "A proof that the *Endymion* was conquered is, the shattered condition in which she appeared ; while the *President* in the contest with her, had sustained but little injury."

How must Commodore Decatur, if he has any shame, blush when he reads this ! Commodore Murray, and his assistants, have out-done him and all his officers :—actually made the decree, in several places, contradict the commodore's official letter !

Even the supplementary one, limits the *Endymion's* damages to her sails, rigging, and spars. Is this what the court calls "shattered condition" ?—Perhaps "tattered" was the word used, but miscopied by the printer. As to the *President's* "little injury," we will not bestow a comment upon it ; and shall, indeed, dismiss the tragi-comico-farce performance, altogether, by merely noticing, that it abounds with indigenous cant-words, such as : "honourables,—heroes,—heroics,—heroisms,—lustres,—stars,—glories,—&c. &c."

After all that has been said about the *President's* capture, one fact appears to be decided : that the only two ships, between which any firing was exchanged, were the *President* and *Endymion*. Every captured merchant-ship, over whom a shot is fired to bring her to, has the same right to call her surrender, a "conflict—contest—engagement," that Commodore De-

captain and his court had, to call so,—the two harmless, unreturned broadsides fired at him by the *Pomone*.

It is indifferent to us, whether or not the President struck, in the first instance, to the *Endymion*; although we sincerely believe she did. The plain tale of Mr. Bowie, the President's school-master, assures us that, when the President hauled away from the *Endymion*, at eight o'clock, her men, to use a familiar phrase, had had enough; and her commander fully determined upon making no further resistance.

How much more it would redound to Commodore Decatur's honour, to have confessed that he struck to the *Endymion*, after an acknowledged close action, than, by denying the fact, to make it appear that, in a ship like the President, he tamely surrendered to two British eighteen-pounder frigates; without firing a shot!

That this was the case, we require no better proof than the commodore's own words. His deposition taken before the Admiralty court at Bermuda, states thus: "Resistance was made against the *Endymion* for two hours and a half, after which the *Endymion* dropped out of the fight. The next ships coming up, two hours and a half after the action with the *Endymion*, were the *Pomone* and *Tenedos*; and to those two ships the President was surrendered. The *Pomone* had commenced her fire within musket-shot. The *Tenedos* did not fire at the time of such surrender; the *Majestic* was in sight also; the *Endymion* was then out of sight. No other ships besides those named, were then seen from the President."

Viewing as we now do, fairly stated, the relative force of the President and *Endymion*; knowing, also, that the former was commanded by an experienced officer; manned with a choice, well-trained crew, and lavishly supplied with every requisite appointment, we are not sanguine enough to imagine, that the *Endymion's* loss would have been so trifling, had she and the President met singly. In that event, the latter would have had no other object to divert her attention, or confine her manœuvres; nor would the spirits of her men have been damped by the conviction, that, if they did not escape, they must be captured.

That the *Endymion*, however, would, even then, have ultimately conquered, the dreadful precision of her fire; her quickness in working, and evident superiority in sailing; added to the established bravery of her officers and crew, are grounds of belief, not to be shaken by the sentence of an American court-martial; nor, indeed, by frothy declamation of any kind.

It is singular, that Commodore Decatur's letter announcing the President's loss, should have been written on board the very ship, which he appeared so anxious to meet, in the frigate *United States*; and should bear date precisely a year and a day after his "very last" letter of challenge. Nor should we omit to remind the reader

der, that the identical ship's companies, present at this meeting, were parties to that very challenge. We cannot therefore be surprised, that the result of the action between the President and Endymion, should have caused among the sticklers for "superior prowess" in the States, such powerful emotions; especially, when it became known, beyond dispute, that the British vessel was inferior in force to the American by nearly a fourth.

Agreeably to our promise at the end of note (E), we shall now make a brief comparison between the American 44-gun frigates, as their force is displayed in the President, and different classes of British ships.

Perhaps no seventy-four-gun ship in the service, has been so often viewed by the Americans, as the Valiant; occasioned by her remaining so long at anchor in front of New-London. She is also of a class of 74's, the most numerous of any; and is of the same extreme length as the President. These reasons have induced us to select the Valiant as a standard.

She mounts fourteen long thirty-twos of a side, upon the lower-deck; fourteen long eighteens of a side, upon the main-deck; five thirty-two-pounder carronades, and two long twelves, of a side, upon the quarter-deck; one thirty-two-pounder carronade, and two long twelves, of a side, upon the fore-castle; and four eighteen-pounder-carronades, (including one shifting or elevating one,) of a side upon the poop; total 83 guns; 42 of which could be fought on the broadside. Her broadside-weight of metal is therefore 1012 lbs; only 96 lbs. more than the President's.

The Valiant had, when on this station, a complement of 529 men, and 37 boys: total 566; but the war-establishment for a ship of her class, is 590.

The difference between "the compactness and strength of sides,"† of the Valiant, or any 74-gun ship, and the President, is about one inch and a half in favour of the latter; although the Valiant's additional breadth of beam‡ augments her tonnage to 1718. By contrasting this 74's actual force, estimated at 3320, with the President's, as it is expressed in Table 3, Mr. Clark's "not very far from double" superiority of force† will be properly understood.

The armament of a sixty-four-gun ship is as follows: thirteen long twenty-fours of a side, upon the lower-deck; thirteen long eighteens of a side, upon the main-deck: five thirty-two-pounder carronades of a side, upon the quarter-deck; one thirty-two-pounder carronade, and one long nine, of a side, upon the fore-castle; and three eighteen-pounder-carronades (including one shifting elevating one) of a side, upon the poop; total 71 guns; 36 of which she would fight on the broadside. Her broadside-weight of metal is therefore 801 lbs.; actually 115 lbs. less than the President's.

A sixty-four's complement is 491; comprising 466 men, and 25

‡ See above page 29.

† Ibid page 14.

‡ See her dimensions in Table 7

boys. Table 7 will shew how much smaller the *Africa* (one of the largest) is, than the *President*. Estimating a sixty-four's actual force at 2707, Tables 1 and 3 will shew, at once, the superiority of an American *frigate*.

Few, if any, of the two-decked fifties, are now in the service. The *Leopard*<sup>†</sup> will serve for comparison. She mounted in 1807,\* eleven long twenty-fours of a side, upon the lower-deck; eleven long twelves of a side, upon the main-deck; four twenty-four-pounder-carronades, three long nines, and one shifting or elevating eighteen-pounder carronade, of a side, upon the quarter-deck and fore-castle; total 59 guns. Of these, 30 were fought in the broadside; which would amount to 537 lbs.

A fifty's complement of men and boys, was 313. The *Leopard* measured 1044 tons; which made her actual force 1924; or, a full tenth inferior to the *Chesapeake*,<sup>‡</sup> instead of the *President*.

The old two-decked forty-fours, mounted long eighteens and twelves; were allowed 294 men and boys; and the *Medusa*, the largest in the service, measured 910 tons. They were not equal to our present 36-gun frigates. The sixty-fours, fifties, and forty-fours, would lose the use of their lower batteries, in blowing weather; by which their force would be diminished more than one half.

In the year 1795, about the period when the American forty-fours were designed, the first-class British frigates were as often called forty-fours, as thirty-eights. Few of them exceeded 980 tons; and their complement of men and boys, was 281. The *Guerriere* will serve as a specimen of French forty-fours in general. In short, very little difference of force prevailed among the first-class frigates of any of the European powers. "Are they not," says the over-cunning American, "called forty-four-gun frigates?—And so are ours; of course, then, the two are equal."

After the loss of our three frigates, Government ordered ships to be constructed, to match the American forty-fours. Two, built of fir, were lately on this station. The *Leander*, one of them, although she measured 1571 tons; and mounted 58 guns, long twenty-fours and forty-two-pounder carronades, had top-sides not thicker than a 36-gun frigate's<sup>§</sup>! Among her crew, consisting of 485, she had 41 boys!

This ship, commanded by a gallant officer, was fitted out to engage a ship like the *President*; with top-sides, twenty two inches thick at the port-cills: made of oak; and perfectly solid. How fortunate, perhaps, that a meeting did not take place. The valour of the officers and men, would not prevent the recoil of her own, nor the shot from the enemy's guns, from tearing to pieces her flimsy sides. She must either have sunk beneath her devoted crew: or SURRENDERED!—What *could* we have said then??!

\*Her affair with the *Chesapeake*, occurred on the 22d of June in that year.

<sup>†</sup>Lost in 1814

<sup>‡</sup>See Table 3

<sup>§</sup>About sixteen inches.







## (Aa)

These four schooners formed part of Commodore Chauncey's squadron of fourteen sail, on Lake-Ontario. Two ships and a brig of this fleet carried 67 long twenty-fours and eighteens; and the smaller vessels a long thirty-two-pounder, and a carronade each, besides guns of smaller calibre.

Sir James Yeo's squadron consisted of six sail; armed principally with carronades; and of scarcely half the force and size of the American squadron. But the American commodore would not risk a battle; although he had the weather-gage nearly the whole time.

The Scourge and Hamilton, "the two best American schooners, mounting together 19 guns,"† sunk in carrying sail. The Growler and Julia were captured. The former mounted one long thirty-two-pounder, and two long sixes, on pivots; and the Julia, one long thirty-two, and one long twelve.

Commodore Chauncey's letter detailing this fresh-water demonstration, occupies two columns of a newspaper; and is really a very entertaining performance. He describes no fewer than fifteen changes of wind in the course of 48 hours!

The commodore reached Sackett's-Harbour, with only 8 out of his 14 sail; having left two disabled schooners (we believe the Asp and Fair-American) in one of the creeks on the American side of the Lake.

## (Bb)

This ship was one of Captain Porter's "sloops of war."‡ She was armed and manned as in Table 4; and had taken three prizes. We should scruple to insert the Georgiana among the national vessels captured from the Americans, did not a "United States' navy-list of Dec. 22d, 1813," contain her name and rate,† properly set-forth. Her commander was also made a "lieutenant-commandant" in the American navy.

## (Cc)

The American ship, Frolic, in latitude 24° 12' N. longitude 81° 25' W. bore down upon the Orpheus, 36; mistaking her for a West-India-man. Before the Frolic got within gun-shot, she shortened sail and hauled upon a wind; the Orpheus then being on her lee-quarter; and the Shelburne schooner, at some distance to windward. As the Frolic and Orpheus passed on opposite tacks, at twenty minutes past twelve, the latter fired two shot: both of which fell short. The breeze freshening, the American ship threw over-board her starboard guns; but, finding herself unexpectedly

\* See above page 32.

† N. Hist. vol. 1. p. 227.

‡ N. Hist. vol. 2. p. 37.

land-locked, she soon afterwards bore up, setting studding-sails. The *Shelburne* schooner, judging from the *Frolic's* appearance that her guns on one side were over-board, approached her on the opposite side ; when, at forty five minutes past one P. M. the *Frolic* hauled down her colours, without firing a shot ; or without any being fired at her, if we except the frigate's two that fell short, about one hour and a quarter previous.

This gentle surrender was attended, according to the report of the British officers, with a circumstance equally mean and disgraceful. "The locks of the great guns were broken ; muskets, pistols, pikes, swords, &c. were thrown overboard ; together with the pendant that was struck."!!

The *Frolic* mounted, when the two shots were fired at her by the *Orpheus*, ten thirty-two-pounder carronades, and one long eighteen, of a side ; total 22 guns ; but she, immediately afterwards, threw overboard exactly one half of her armament. The long eighteen proved to be an English ship-gun ; and was supposed to have been one of the *Macedonian's*.

We now recollect, it was currently reported off New-London, in January 1814, that Commodore Decatur, to prepare the frigates *United States* and *Macedonian* to meet the *Endymion* and *Stafira*, in the event of his challenge being accepted, (as it was in part,) had substituted eight long thirty-twos for an equal number of the *United States'* main-deck mid-ship twenty-fours, and shifted the latter to the *Macedonian* : her eighteens being destined for distribution among the new sloops of war (of which the *Frolic* was one) then fitting for sea.

The complement of the *Frolic* consisted of 171 men : all young and healthy : and scarcely one of which (if we except two or three of the midshipmen) were under five feet, eight inches, in height. How many scores of commanders are there in our navy, that, with such a ship, and such a ship's company, would have given battle to the American frigate *Essex* ; even had she an armed schooner in company ?

This fine corvette was a sister-ship to the American *Peacock*, the late *Wasp* (2), ship *Argus*, &c. and is now the *Florida* in our service. Her dimensions, both in hull and spars, will be found in Table 7.

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(Dd)

The *Battlesnake* had thrown her guns over-board, when chased by two frigates in the Bay of Biscay. Her armament was stated to have been six twenty-four-pounder carronades, and two long nines, of a side : total 16 guns. She had, when captured, a ship's com-

pany, superior, if possible, to the Frolic's ; and in number 131. They had all iron skull-caps similar to the crew of the Argus.

The Syren was captured after a fair chase of eleven hours ; during which, she threw all her guns over-board. They consisted of two forty-two-pounder, and twelve twenty-four pounder, carronades, and two long nines ; total 16. It was said, that the two forty-two-pounder carronades had been taken from the quarter-deck of the President frigate, soon after her arrival at New-York, in February 1814.

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(Ee)

These two schooners and another of similar force, had anchored close to Fort-Erie, (then in the possession of the Americans,) on the Canada-lakes, for the purpose of flanking the approaches of the British troops. Captain Dobbs, with a detachment of seamen and marines, succeeded in getting his gig and five batteaux, across by land from the Niagara-river to Lake-Erie : a distance of eight miles.

Two of the schooners were carried, sword in hand, in a few minutes ; " and the third," says Captain Dobbs, " would certainly have fallen, had the cables not been cut, which made us drift to leeward of her among the rapids."

The schooners were commanded by lieutenants ; mounted three long twelves ; and had a complement of 25 men each. We lost a lieutenant and one seaman killed, and four wounded ; total 6 ; the Americans, one killed and seven wounded ; total 8.

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(Ff)

These composed Commodore Barney's famous flotilla, that was to have cleared the Chesapeake of the British ; and, at last, could not save itself ! A Boston paper of August 30th, states, that it consisted of " about 36 gun-boats, besides ten or fifteen barges."—It seldom happens that the Americans over-rate their force : we have no authority, however, for exceeding the number in the table.

One gun-boat only was captured : the rest were blown up. Most of them carried a heavy long gun in the bow, and a carronade in the stern ; and were manned with from forty to sixty men each. The commodore's sloop was a fine large vessel.

These ships, together with the entire frame of a 74-gun ship, were destroyed by the Americans, at the city of Washington, to prevent their falling into the hands of the British.

The *Essex* was ready to be launched; and had been named the *Columbia*; but Capt. Porter's "brilliant exploit" off Valparaiso, occasioned the change. The *Java* and *Guerriere* were her sister-ships; and differ from the *President*, chiefly, in being from 22 to 24 inches broader on the beam; to enable them to carry long thirty-twos on the main-deck.

The two next frigates we insert on the authority of two "United States, navy-lists;" one of 16th October, and the other of the 22d December, 1813. In the former, these ships are stated to be at "Washington-city *refitting*;" and in the latter, their names also appear. The close blockade of the Potomac, no doubt, prevented the completion of them. The *New-York* cost, says Mr. Clark, "159,639 dollars, and 60 cents," or £44,344 6 sterling; the *Boston* "119,570 dollars" or £33,215 17 sterling; and both frigates were declared to "have been constructed upon the most approved models for vessels of their rates."\* In 1812, the "probable expense of repairing" the "*New-York*, 36," as well as the *Chesapeake*, was estimated at "120,000 dollars;" and of the "*Boston*, 32," at "60,000 dollars."†—The American prints, when speaking of the loss at Washington pass over these two vessels thus: "together with several old ships." The *Argus* was "ready for sea." She was a sister-vessel to the *Frolic*.

We have given the *Essex* (2) the same number of guns that the *President* mounted; the *New-York*, as the *Chesapeake*, (including the twelve-pounder-carronade;) and the *Boston* as the *Essex*. "Two hundred pieces of artillery of different calibres, as well as a vast quantity of small arms," were destroyed by the British troops; besides the immense quantity destroyed before they arrived.

How kind the Americans were to burn the shipping, and public property. The new frigate, the ordinance, timber, &c. &c. the British *could* not have carried away; and the delay in destroying them, might have proved fatal to the small band of invaders.

### (Hh)

The *Adams* was a very fine ship, originally a 32-gun frigate; but, after undergoing various alterations, was reduced to a corvette. She was burnt at Hampden, (whither she had just arrived from a cruise,) by the orders of her commander, Captain Morris, on the approach of a part of the British troops that took possession of Castine.

She mounted twenty eighteen-pounder-columbiads, (nearly equal to a long-gun,) four long eighteens, and two long twelves; total 26 guns. She had a complement of 248; chiefly masters and mates of merchant-men

TABLE 5.

ENUMERATING the CAPTURED BRITISH and AMERICAN SHIPS OF WAR, (and their respective guns-mounted, ) which each party succeeded in getting in- to port ; and which, as ships of war, were not subsequently re-captured.

BRITISH SHIPS.			AMERICAN SHIPS.		
No.		Guns.	No.		Guns.
1	of 49 guns.....	49	1	of 58 guns.....	58
2	" 33 " .....	66	1	" 49 " .....	49
1	" 20 " .....	20	1	" 46 " .....	46
1	" 19 " .....	19	1	" 22 " .....	22
1	" 18 " .....	18	2	" 30 " .....	40
1	" 17 " .....	17	3	" 16 " .....	48
1	" 16 " .....	16	2	" 14 " .....	28
1	" 15 " .....	15	1	" 12 " .....	12
1	" 14 " .....	14	1	" 10 " .....	10
2	" 13 " .....	26	23 { from 9 " } to 1 " } .....		
2	" 10 " .....	20			
5	{ from 5 " } to 1 " }	17	—		—
19	Total,	Guns 297	36	Total,	Guns 382

TABLE 6.

SHewing the AGGREGATE of the SHIPS OF WAR, their GUNS, MEN, and TONS-BURTHEN, which have been captured and destroyed, reciprocally, by Great-Britain and the United States, since the 18th of June 1812.

	NO.	GUNS.	MEN.	TONS.
BRITISH ships.....	34	578	3204	11,228
AMERICAN do.....	69	735	3356	16,823

TABLE.

*Dimensions of ships' hulls.*

Rates.	Ships' Names.	Length		Main	Depth.	Tons.
		Extreme	of keel	Breadth		
		<i>ft. in.</i>	<i>ft. in.</i>	<i>ft. in.</i>	<i>ft. in.</i>	
British.	74 VALIANT.....	177: 4	142: 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	47: 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	20: 0	1718
	64 AFRICA.....	163: 10	132: 9	44: 9	18: 1	1415
	44 ENDYMION.....	163: 6	132: 3	42: 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	19: 4	1277
	38 GUERRIERE.....	158: 0	129: 7	39: 5	12: 10	1081
	„ SHANNON.....	153: 8	125: 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	39: 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	12: 11	1066
	36 PHOEBE.....	146: 3	119: 0	38: 3	13: 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	926
	22 CYANE.....	121: 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	98: 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	32: 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	10: 6	559
	20 LEVANT.....	118: 6	97: 0	29: 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	13: 3	462
	18 PEACOCK.....B	101: 8	77: 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	30: 7	12: 9	386
	„ EPERVIER.....B	101: 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	77: 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	30: 6	12: 9	382
American.	„ PENGUIN.....B	101: 6	77: 3	30: 7	12: 9	381
	„ PELICAN.....B	101: 5	77: 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	30: 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	12: 10	385
	4 LANDRAIL ....Cut.	58: 3	41: 9	18: 2	8: 8	78
	44 PRESIDENT.....	177: 4	145: 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	45: 2	19: 8	1570
	36 CHESAPEAKE.....	158: 0	128: 6	41: 0	13: 9	1149
	18 FROLIC.....	122: 0	98: 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	32: 4	11: 4	518
	16 WASP.....	108: 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	85: 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	30: 10	14: 6	426
	5 GUN-BOAT.....Slp.	70: 4	61: 11	18: 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	5: 2	112
	10 HARLEQUIN, Pr. Sc.	105: 8	81: 5	25: 10	12: 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	322 $\frac{1}{2}$

I.

*Dimensions of ships' masts and yards.*

Main-mast.		Main-top-mast.		Main yard.		M-top-sail yard		Refer to
Len.	Diam.	Len.	Diam.	Len.	Diam.	Len.	Diam.	
<i>ft. in.</i>	<i>ft. in.</i>	<i>ft. in.</i>	<i>ft. in.</i>	<i>ft. in.</i>	<i>ft. in.</i>	<i>ft. in.</i>	<i>ft. in.</i>	
108: 0	3: 0	64: 10	1: 7 $\frac{1}{4}$	96: 8	1: 10 $\frac{5}{8}$	70: 6	1: 2 $\frac{1}{8}$	p. 14.93
100: 0	2: 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	57: 0	1: 5 $\frac{1}{8}$	86: 10	1: 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	63: 6	1: 1 $\frac{1}{4}$	p. 93.
94: 0	2: 7	53: 10	1: 5 $\frac{1}{8}$	87: 5	1: 8 $\frac{1}{4}$	66: 0	1: 2 $\frac{1}{8}$	p. 86.
92: 0	2: 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	55: 2	1: 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	81: 6	1: 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	60: 9	1: 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	p. 12.20. 25.68.
90: 0	2: 3	54: 0	1: 4 $\frac{1}{8}$	80: 10	1: 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	59: 0	1: 0 $\frac{1}{4}$	p. 68.81.
75: 0	2: 0	45: 0	1: 1 $\frac{1}{4}$	65: 6	1: 3	47: 7	—: 9 $\frac{1}{4}$	p. 55.
70: 0	1: 9 $\frac{1}{4}$	42: 0	1: 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	59: 6	1: 2 $\frac{1}{8}$	42: 10	—: 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	ibid.
68: 3	1: 10	38: 11	1: 0 $\frac{1}{4}$	54: 7	—: 11 $\frac{1}{8}$	42: 0	—: 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	p. 17.30. 41. 41. 47. 58. 76.
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	p. 45.
101: 6	2: 9 $\frac{1}{4}$	62: 0	1: 7	92: 0	1: 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	69: 0	1: 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	p. 12.20. 25 55 86
92: 6	2: 6	58: 10	1: 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	84: 6	1: 6 $\frac{1}{4}$	63: 8	1: 2 $\frac{1}{4}$	p. 68.
75: 0	2: 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	45: 0	1: 3 $\frac{1}{4}$	67: 0	1: 4	50: 0	—: 11	p. 41.44. 47. 58.
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	p. 17.
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	p. 45.
84: 0	2: 0	—	—	Fore 64: 0	—	—	—	p. 42.

## CONCLUSION.

Our loss in national vessels by the late war with the United States, was comparatively great; yet there is some consolation in knowing that, in every instance, "the proud old British union," preserved its honour inviolate.

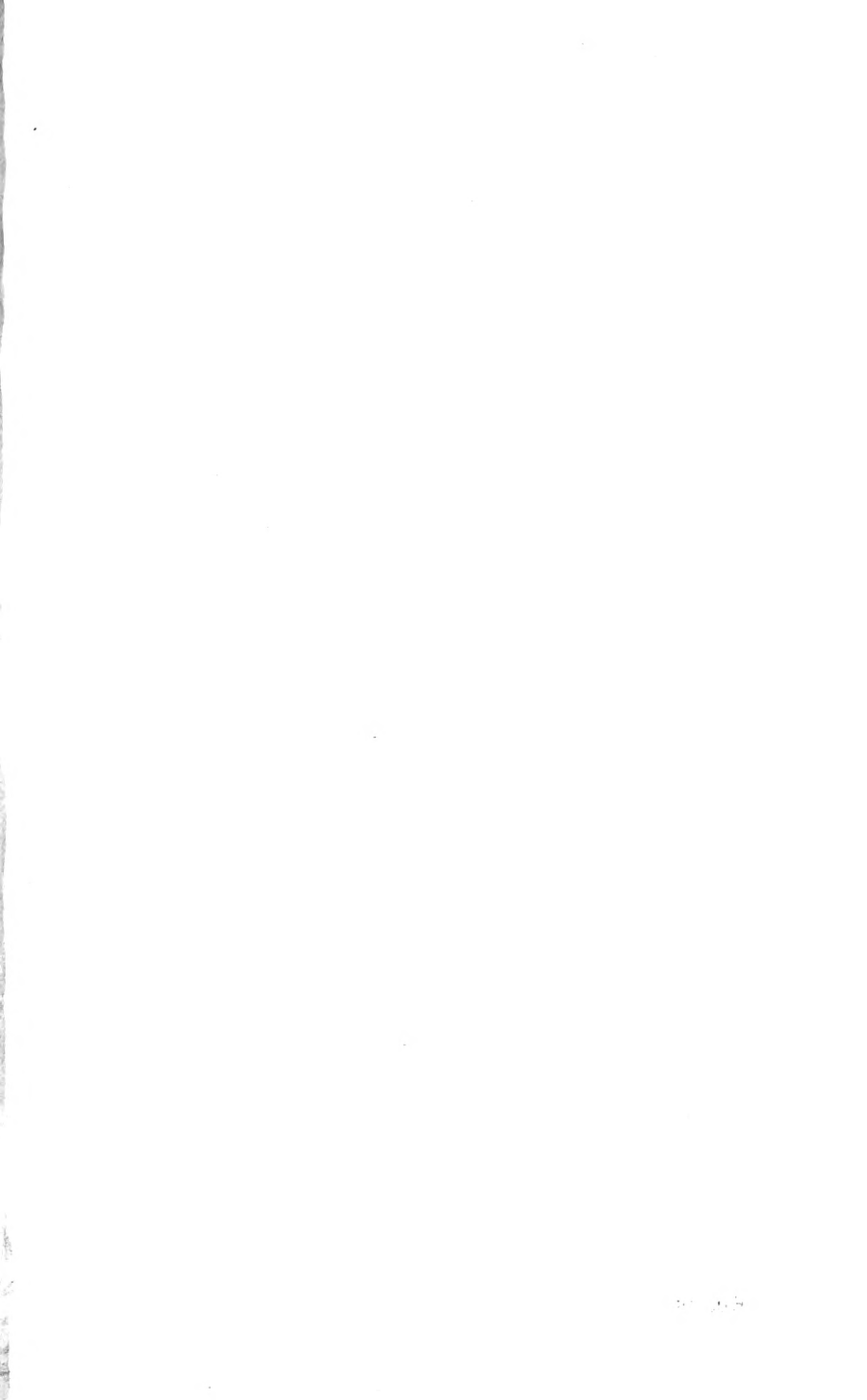
Had promised or prudent arrangements been adopted by the proper authorities on shore, one lake-action would have been unnecessary; the other, unseasonably hastened as it was, crowned with success. The preservation of the two fleets, would have considerably diminished our losses, both in number and importance; and the possession of an American fleet, and the command of a Canada-lake, been a very small part of the gains accruing to us, from a victory on Lake-Champlain.

On the ocean, the intrepidity of British seamen led them, as usual, to seek combats of the most unequal kind; while the cautious American, far swifter of foot, fought only, when he knew the superiority was on his own side. Had our ships of war been all ship-rigged, every eighteen-gun vessel we have lost, might have chased in vain, or cruized unmolested by, an American ship, inferior in force to a frigate.

How shall we convince the unsophisticated reader, that the Americans have recorded the actions comprised in Table 1, as gained over, in some cases, "a superior," in the remainder, (except, perhaps, the *Alert* and *Essex*), "an equal, British force"; and, on the other hand, that the four actions in Table 3, blaze forth amidst the archives at Washington, as "most brilliant defences";—which would have ended in "victory," had not "accident,—artifice," or—the "over-whelming superiority" of the enemy, converted them into defeats! Such "victories" as the first, and such "brilliant defences" as the last, and *none others*, have made "HEROES" in the new republic, more plentiful, than in the oldest nation of Europe!

Unswayed by an empty pomp of words, let all such as are entitled to claim "the richest inheritance of this earth,—a participation in the name, character, and freedom of Britons, "assert and maintain, that no British ship has been captured by an American one, of equal force; and that it was not our fault, there were not many repetitions of, the—CHESAPEAKE and SHANNON.













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